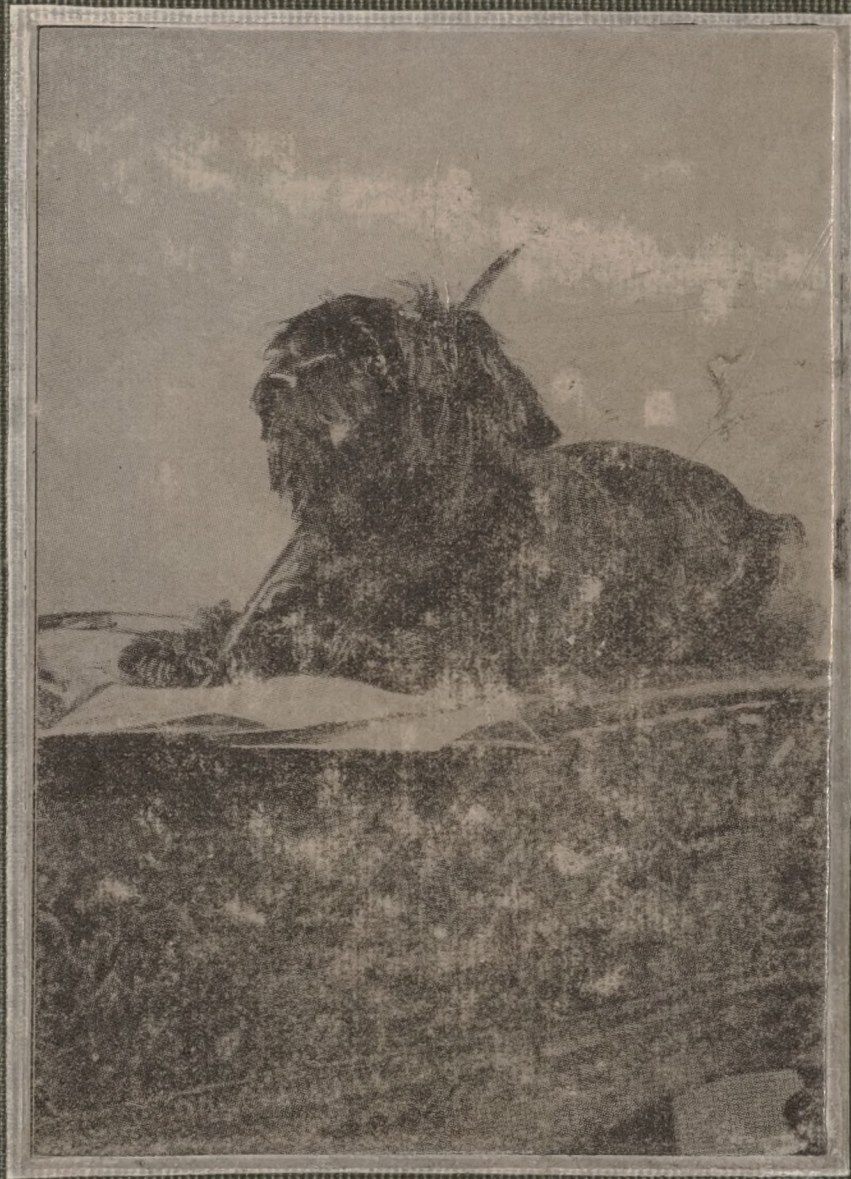


A THOROUGH-BRED MONGREL



by

STEPHEN TOWNSEND



Class PZ 10

.3

Book .T 662 Th

Copyright N^o

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

A THOROUGH-BRED MONGREL



"I wish you wouldn't interrupt me when I'm busy."

Copyrighted June, 1899.

A
Thorough-bred
Mongrel

*The Tale of a Dog told by a
Dog to Lovers of Dogs*

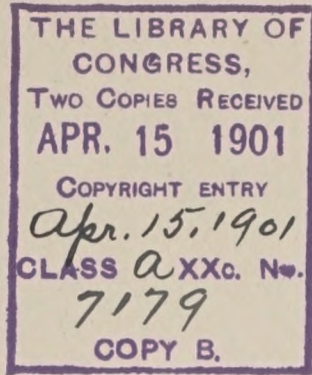
By
Stephen Townesend, F.R.C.S.

With a Preface by
Frances Hodgson Burnett

Illustrated by
J. A. Shepherd

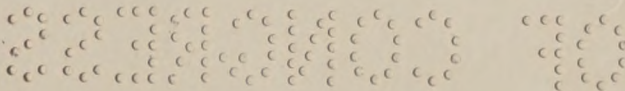
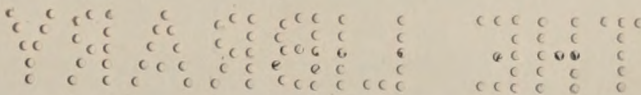


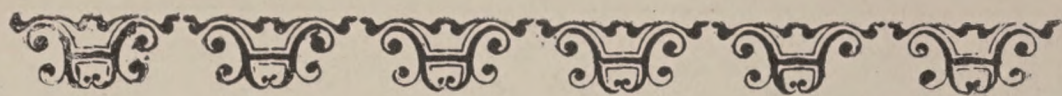
New York
Frederick A. Stokes Company
Publishers



PZ10
13
T662
Th

Copyright, 1901
by
Stephen Townsend





“ H E T T ”

AN INTRODUCTION

T *HAT she is not a mere shadow of the imagination, but a living intimate whose every hour is spent lying at one's feet, trotting by one's side, or gazing into one's eyes with lenient affection, seems to me to add interest to her literary effort. And in a large circle of human acquaintance formed within the last ten years, I frequently reflect that I can count no more clearly defined individuality than that of the little person who is the original of the heroine, and the supposed narrator of the story I now preface. I say "person" because I feel that to speak of her as a mere dog would be an inadequate thing, and—if she were to hear of it—would cause her serious offence. I once knew a little girl whose dread was that—through the indiscreet remarks of the uninitiated—her favourite child plaything might discover that it was only a doll. That Hett should hear herself referred to as a dog, tout court, would seem an indelicate and offensive thing. The judicial nature of her character, the clearness of her intellect, the dignified sweetness of her*

reserve, seem without doubt to demand more refinement of consideration.

Some canine pets are beautiful, some are accomplished, most of them are affectionate. Hett is too dignified for tricks, affection is too slight a word to express the nature of her feeling, and she is not a pet but an intelligent and sympathetic friend of the family—a sort of relation, combining the sentiments of mother, aunt and patroness. It is in fact her intellect which is the notable feature in her delightful and admirable personality. She was bought from the Lost Dogs' Home at Battersea, some ten years ago. Her master, being a dog-lover, had gone to see the place. Among the scores of restless, leaping, barking and howling creatures, he observed a black Skye, who, in the midst of the pandemonium of din, stood silently upon her hind legs, placing her forepaws upon the railing of the cage, and gazing at him with pained decorum. She was rather suggestive of a refined widowed lady, who, having lost her way, found herself involved in a howling mob in the City. She made no complaints, merely appealed to him in silence as to a gentleman who would comprehend the painfulness of a position so annoying, and relieve her from its embarrassment as a mere

matter of courtesy. He purchased her at once, took her home to his chambers in the Temple, and from that hour they have been two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one.

To me there has always been something almost tragic in the personality of this strange little creature. She is small and black and shaggy, she has a grave little face, one of her ears stands erect while the other droops. The effect is something similar to that produced by a person who has the habit of lifting one eyebrow. The erect ear is a mere mental expression. It means that a creature who thinks so much and cannot speak lives in a continual strain of inquiry. I am convinced that she wants to know the meaning of Life and Death—of Absence, which to her seems Death—of sad faces and of happy ones. At times she sits down and ponders deeply. I have seen her do it. The tragedy of her is that she cannot speak. That a creature who plainly thinks so much and so earnestly, should have no words, seems at times uncanny and unnatural. We, who are so much less discreet, so much less serious and consistent, have the power to express all our incompetencies—to say any foolish thing or fatal one. Hett

cannot even correct or reprove us, but must remain silent even before fatuities. Her unspoken summing up, however, of the illogical and unjust is, I have observed, a serious thing. Her gravely speculative gaze, when fixed upon the foolish or unreasoning, is a thing to cause the fatuous or criminal to blench. One is always conscious of her as an audience; one addresses her in the ordinary tone used to one's friends, one asks questions of her and she replies—with her eyes—with strange, pathetically human little sounds—with her caressing, insistent nose and expressive body. We are conscious that she reflects upon us, that she makes mental reservations—that it is only this curious inability to speak which prevents her aiding us with advice, admonition and encouragement. In a large country house, constantly filled with changing parties of guests, she occupies a definite position. She does not frisk, she has none of the appetites which make for weakness; no one would think of offering her food as a bribe or luxury—she would regard it as incomprehensible. She requires our society, she feels that we require hers; she listens to conversation and analyses it. Nothing is more common than for someone to say: "Hett is thinking"—so and so—or "I wonder what Hett

has to say." So when the story of a dog was to be written, what more natural than that Hett should write it? Hett had the point of view, the experience, the contemplative mind of the observer. It was in the power of the less highly discriminating creature—the Human—to supply her with that speech which she is so curiously denied, and which, if she possessed it, might lead to our so much greater enlightenment. The story was founded upon certain rather amusing facts—Hett heard them discussed. Her reflections upon them would surely add value to them and make them doubly entertaining. Her friends and acquaintances, her followers, admirers and dependents—feel that this has been done.

Frances Hodgson Burnett

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
THE ARRIVAL	I

CHAPTER II.

A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER	27
----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

"WOT IF I AIN'T?"	46
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

THE BARNHAM DOG SHOW	68
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

A NIGHTMARE AND A RECONCILIATION	97
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

THE FALL OF THE CHIHUAHUA	122
-------------------------------------	-----

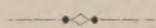
CHAPTER VII.

BILLY AND I MAKE FRIENDS	146
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MYSTERY SOLVED	160
------------------------------	-----

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



	PAGE
1.* "I wish you wouldn't interrupt me when I'm busy"	iv
2. "I simply <i>devoured</i> literature"	5
3. "Both Jock and I broke forth into a chorus of involuntary howls"	15
4. "Mr. Singwell was thundering out of the piano 'The National Anthem of Mexico'"	26
5. "I obtained my first good view of the Chihuahua"	29
6. "'I congratulate you,' telepathed Jock to me"	35
7. "The same to you, Jock, and many of them"	39
8. "I christen thee 'His Majesty, King of Chihuahua'"	43
9. "Good morning, Hett"	49
10. "Jock cocked his ears"	51
11.* Before the bath	52
12.* In the bath	52
13.* After the bath	53
14.* Toilet complete	53
15. "He offered to fight me"	55

* Photographs from life by Bradshaw & Sons, Newgate Street,

	PAGE
16. On parade	59
17. "Wot if I ain't?"	63
18. "'Voilà two!' as I once heard a French poodle remark; 'see the pair of us'"	71
19. "But sharp with her teeth"	89
20. His Majesty triumphant	95
21. "I had not a wag left"	99
22. A Thorough-bred Mongrel	107
23. "My Pa says it is very characteristic"	111
24. "'Billy,' said I, in a short yap, looking over the edge of the basket"	123
25. "Drunken Billy bounded up in the air like a shot rabbit"	126
26. "He seemed to regard the proceedings as specially designed for his delectation"	135
27. The fall of the Chihuahua	143
28. "'I did it! I did it!' I snarled fiercely"	151
29. "I wish I was dead"	155
30. "Jock would have none of it"	161
31. "Well, <i>you're</i> a beauty, <i>you</i> are—a <i>real</i> beauty!"	165
32.* "Dear me! what is the word I want?"	168
33. "What in the name of heaven is <i>that</i> ?"	171
34. The End	175

* Photograph from life by Bradshaw & Sons, Newgate Street.

CHAPTER I

THE ARRIVAL

AS I said to Jock the other morning, as we were lying on the lawn waiting for the breakfast gong to sound, "A sensible dog takes human beings as he finds them. They have their good points and their bad points (some of them have no points at all), but they mean well, and they are the most intelligent animals we have."

Jock growled.

"Look here," he said, holding a bone between his paws which he had sneaked from the kitchen on the previous evening, "Look at my case—I've let my people go travelling by themselves and how do they show their 'intelligence'? I'm left to the servants, an underbred set of bipeds who don't know how to wait on a dog properly. I'm not even decently valeted, my coat hasn't been brushed for a week, and I haven't got a collar on. Look at my

last night's dinner, biscuits and water—*water*—no gravy, mind you, and this beastly bone to finish up with."

I knew it was all swagger about the bone, but I just wagged quietly to myself and said nothing. It is no good arguing with a collie. Big dogs are generally irrational, and settle their disputes after the manner of Humans, by brute force. Besides, I felt sorry for Jock. I always go down into the country for a little ratting and rabbiting every summer, and this having been an unusually heavy season in town, my people have rented *his* people's kennel for six months. Jock had allowed his family to run over to the Continent alone, Jock not being fond of railway travelling, and he found himself in the anomalous position of being a stranger on his own premises. But there was no good growling about it. Besides, it was probably his own fault. *My* people would no more think of travelling without me than they would of chasing a hare across a field. If they had any such scheme, I should put my hind paw down on it promptly. I should appeal to their reason. I should—SIT UP. I never knew that to fail even with the most scentless and incanine of Humans. When a dog has any trouble with a well-bred Biped one may bet one's last biscuit it is

generally his own fault. Of course, there is such a thing as being *too* kind—even to Human Beings—and then they are apt to presume. For instance, in town I should never dream of going out for a walk without proper attendance. In the country I often go rabbiting alone (Humans are so slow in their movements and so apt to get lost), but I never tell my people lest they should take advantage of it and shirk their proper responsibilities. I have known some really good Bipeds ruined in this way. They get careless and inattentive, and one has always to be reminding them of their duties. They have the same trouble with the lower breeds amongst themselves, bad servants, careless tradespeople, and others. The more consideration you show such animals, the more they abuse it. The point is to nip these things in the *kitten* and not wait to fight them as cats. The other day one of my people wanted me to fetch my own collar. I felt this might prove a dangerous precedent, so I sacrificed my reputation for intelligence to my principles and, smiling in an imbecile manner, pretended not to understand. With Humans, if you want a thing done, never do it yourself. However, it was difficult to drive anything into Jock's thick head. He wasn't a bit intellectual, and thought more of chasing a sheep on the hillside than of psychological discussion.

"Look here, Jock," I said, rolling lazily over on to my back and stretching my paws stiffly in the air as an indication to my master that he might come and rub my tummer, "growl as you will, you can't deny that Human Beings are not only useful but intelligent—highly intelligent—animals."

"In what way?" snapped Jock, in a voice that might be heard in the adjoining county.

"In many ways," I replied with studied mildness, and assuming a more dignified position; "but first let me tell you that in the best circles it is not the custom to converse in barks suggestive of a bull, or of that most detestable of Human inventions, the horn of a motor car. You are not addressing a flock of sheep, but an educated lady, who allows no dog, big or little, to speak to her like that. And I'll, further, trouble you for my tail when you've done lying on it."

Jock apologised, and, to conceal his discomfiture, snapped at a fly, which he missed. It is often the way with these big country collies. They have no manners and less education. Had it not been for my desire to improve Jock, I should have left him to himself and his sheep-dreams. Personally I had had unusual educational advantages. As a puppy I was brought up in the house of a famous scientist, and

had the free run of the library. I simply *devoured* literature. I should have remained scientific to this day, and Jock would never have experienced the advantage of knowing me, had I not made a horrible discovery. The scientist proved to be a criminal of the worst type. Amongst his books I found what was simply a treatise on murder under the title,



"I simply *devoured* literature."

"Experiments on Living Animals." I read—and destroyed it. A difference of opinion followed, and I felt I must dispose of him. The next time I took him a walk, I allowed him to get lost.

I had seen more of the world in a week than Jock in a lifetime, and it seemed my duty, as an educated Skye, to enlighten his bucolic mind.

Yes, Jock," I continued, "Human Beings are useful and intelligent in many ways. They are amusing to caress, clean in their habits, comfortable to sit on. They never tire of making things for us, to destroy, they——"

"See here," broke in Jock, laying his head on his front paws and looking me straight in the face; "when I was young and went in for sheep, I kept a shepherd for the show of the thing. I might as well have kept a scarecrow. He could no more have brought a flock of sheep down the hillside without me than he could have caught a hare in the open field. Who was the more useful and intelligent, he or I?"

"But, my dear Jock——"

"I have a friend down in the village," continued Jock, not allowing me to get a bark in edgeways, "an eccentric old dog called 'Fido' who keeps a blind man. Fido found him groping about in the lanes one day as helpless as a new-born pup, took him home, and made a pet of him—I'd as soon make a pet of a dead sheep. Fido is tied to him for the rest of his life, has to take him out every morning, drag him about by a string, carry a tin can around and collect biscuits for him, take him back to kennel and watch him through the night, and yet you call Human Beings useful and intelligent.'

"My dear Jock, you mustn't take shepherds and blind men as representative breeds of Humans. Some of us, out of philanthropy (and there are no philanthropists like ourselves) keep a blind man ; some of you collies have a taste for shepherds, but they are both confessedly mongrels, being the only bipeds who are *allowed* to live with us without being expected to pay a licence."

"Yes, but they are not the only Bipeds who do."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Jock, scratching his ear with his hind-paw in a knowing manner, "that Humans are often *frauds*, and what dog would condescend to be that?"

I turned one eye on Jock's bone, and one eye on Jock, cocked my left ear, and said nothing.

"Yes, *frauds*," repeated Jock, lumbering up on to his great feet and giving himself a huge shake to cover his confusion. "I know a spaniel, a regular aristocrat and very proud of his descent, who took up with a medical man, a real Vet., mind you, not one of the so-called doctors who attend to Humans only—a man who ought to have had some sense of the respect due to a dog. Now what do you think? The man actually was *unlicensed*. Of course they fined him heavily. But imagine the humiliation of my friend,

who had to appear in court! I'd like to *worry* a man like that."

"Which sentiment, Jock, is a disgrace to caninity. You make me feel that the more I see of dogs, such dogs as you, the more I like Humans."

"I'll be *muzzled* if I do," said Jock, scratching himself violently.

"Don't swear, Jock," I replied quietly, "and as you've no manners you'll excuse me leaving you. The gong has just sounded and I see my master looking for me."

"Looking for you," growled Jock savagely; "What does he want to *look* for? Why can't he scent you? What's the good of Humans? They can't run as fast as we can, they can't see better, they can't hear as well, and as for scent, they could hardly point a sewer at twenty paces."

To these rude remarks I did not condescend to reply, but, following my master into the house, sought my customary place under the table. There is a great deal to be learned from under a table, and yet it is a point of view entirely neglected by humans at the present day. In the good old times, I believe, this was not the case, and humans frequently disappeared beneath the table (especially after a hearty meal), to contemplate those characteristics of their

fellow-creatures which I find so interesting and so full of unconscious revelation. On this particular morning a single glance at the dozen pairs of Human paws around me told me I should not be at a loss for occupation. My "Pa" (I like to think of the present master I own as my father, for I love him, and would lay down my life for him) had got his outdoor paws on, and would probably want me to take him for a walk. Dr. Coghlan and pretty little Miss Seaton wore tennis shoes, and would be disappointed if I were not at hand to field for them. Miss Bretford, a jolly American girl, was dressed in a skirt so short, and exposing such an amount of limb (at least as seen from where I was stationed) as only to be excused by the contemplation of an approaching bicycle ride. The literary members of the party were evidently all prepared for indoor work. Of these the most distinguished was my Pa's hostess Mrs. Flufton Bennett, whose dainty little feet peeped forth in the neatest of shoes. I noticed, with a feeling of shame at my own want of thoroughness, that Mr. Singwell still managed to balance on his hind-paws the remnants of the slippers I had worried the week previously. These, combined with trousers hitched up at the knees, and a trifle frayed below, displayed his characteristic feet to their fullest advantage, and

testified to that simplicity of disposition and ingenuous disregard for appearances which is one of his many charms. The other literary pair of limbs on view were much, very much, "en evidence." They belonged to Miss Letitia Fletcher, whose strong, manly feet, planted well apart and firmly on the ground, suggested exceptional self-assurance and an almost aggressive virility. To be sure, at the present moment, Miss Letitia was engaged in a polemical conversation (Letitia's conversations always *were* polemical) with Mr. Singwell. Letitia was being chaffed, and Letitia didn't like it.

"Now you children," interrupted Mrs. Flufton Bennett, "when you have done quarrelling, I want to read you a letter I have just received from—whom do you think, Viv?" addressing her son and heir, a fine, healthy looking boy of sixteen. "You will remember him at Washington, John Anthony. He writes from Chi-hu-a-hu-a, in Mexico."

"What place?" asked Singwell.

"Chi-hu-a-hu-a," repeated Mrs. Bennett, with deliberation.

"It is commonly pronounced 'Shiwawa,'" piped Letitia ostentatiously.

"Mrs. Bennett could never be common," remarked Singwell. "Chi-hu-a-hu-a sounds much more original.

To live in a place with such a name is to be distinguished."

"In Spanish," continued Letitia severely, and ignoring Mr. Singwell's attempt to treat the matter lightly, "in Spanish 'hu' corresponds to the English 'w'—the word is Shiwawa."

"I am entirely unprejudiced on the subject," rejoined her hostess. "Shiwawa let it be."

"DEAR MRS. FLUFTON BENNETT,—To-day I am sending to you, under the care of my brother, who is just leaving here for Europe, one of the 'Chihuahua' dogs I promised to secure for you, if at the peril of my life. They are the smallest creatures, I believe, of the dog species Nature produces. The one I send you weighs one pound and three-quarters, and the soft-eyed Mexican from whom I bought him swore by all she held holy that he was three years old, had attained his full growth, and that ages would not add one ounce to his weight. I am told that these dogs are so intelligent that they can be taught to understand any language, and so sensitive that their large eyes fill with tears at a word of reproach. I have not yet seen this one weep with any degree of bitterness, and I have not had time to try him with Ollendorf, but when

I see him again I have no doubt he will be entirely polyglot.

“With kindest regards,

“Sincerely yours,

“JOHN ANTHONY.

“P.S.—My brother has promised to deliver the dog with his own hands at your country house, where I believe you are now staying. You may expect him any time after the receipt of this letter.”

There was a murmur of Human voices, but I could hear nothing distinctly. There seemed to be a burning weight at my heart, that turned me sick and dizzy. The blood surged in my ears, my tail hung motionless, and my nose became dry and parched. A “Chihuahua” dog! A dog from Mexico! A dog whose telepathic processes might be entirely different to ours, and who perhaps barked in a different language—an interloper. It was an outrage on Jock and myself! The thing was not to be endured. The glamour of Mr. Singwell’s toes was lost to me. I walked from under the table and met Jock nose to nose.

“Did you hear?” growled Jock.

“Yes, I heard—come outside and talk it over.”

We went out into the sunshine and lay down on

the gravel walk. We could distinctly hear the hum of Human voices from within.

"The dear, sweet little thing!" Mrs. Bennett was saying. "Just fancy, only one pound and three-quarters in weight!"

"The angel love!" echoed Letitia. "You'll be able to carry him in your muff."

"I hope you'll muzzle the animal," said Singwell. "I don't trust these foreign hounds."

Jock and I involuntarily wagged our tails.

"They are most sensitive creatures, these Chihuahua dogs," piped Letitia; "the restraint of a muzzle breaks their hearts, and a whipping is enough to kill them."

"I believe it is true," said Dr. Coghlan in his grave, earnest drawl, "that the eyes of these animals will fill with tears at the sound of music, or even on hearing a story told in pathetic inflections of the voice."

From the turn of Jock's upper lip at that moment I anticipated that when the "Chihuahua" arrived, he would have something more than music to rely on for the exhibition of his capacity for shedding tears.

"It will be an extremely useful animal to you literary people," said Miss Bretford, with her American inflection. "When you are doubtful as to the effect of your last chapter, you can 'try it on the dog.'"

"That's a very good idea," cackled Miss Letitia, "don't you think so, Mr. Singwell. The moment the 'Chihuahua' arrives I shall read him the whole of my new story."

"I don't approve of cruelty to animals," replied Singwell, in an abstracted manner. "Eh, oh! I beg your pardon, I thought you were talking of muzzles. Oh, yes, splendid idea. The 'Chihuahua' shall hear that four act play of mine, and if he survives, I'll try it on the public."

"That dog is going to lead a life," remarked Miss Bretford, demurely. "Who would be a 'Chihuahua'?"

"Ah, but at meal times," said Singwell, "what a hero he will be. Carried in on a silken pillow, with a pink ribbon tied round his dear little neck, fed on the daintiest food by the daintiest of fingers, and knowing that on the wink of his limpid eye and on the wag of his curly tail, hang the making or the marring of unpublished masterpieces."

I don't know how it happened or why it occurred but at this particular moment both Jock and I broke forth into a chorus of involuntary howls. I have since tried to analyse the feelings of the moment, and the reason of this emotional display. It could not have been jealousy, for we did not know the "Chihuahua" dog. But we howled, and considering

the disparity in our weights, I believe I howled the louder.

A splish-splash of water from the window and a sudden sensation of damp cold, recalled me to my senses, and in turning round I found I was indebted for this kind attention to my master.



“Both Jock and I broke forth into a chorus of involuntary howls.”

“Get off, you brutes! what are you yelping about here?”

I got off.

It was the best I could do. It flattered my Pa's vanity as a person of importance. Besides, I do *not* like cold water. True to the good blood that runs in my veins I endeavoured to preserve a perfect equanimity and even to express an approbation

which I did not feel. My tail, however, refused to wag. It hung behind me like a lump of lead. I had no control over it. It dropped between my legs. It was an unruly member. I looked at it reproachfully—I moved away—it *followed* me. This reassured me to some extent: I felt that I should soon have complete mastery over my whole being.

Jock had lumbered on ahead. I joined him.

“Jock,” I said, “you’re right. Humans are not perfect: I could not live without them, but they are *not* perfect.”

We lay on the grass for a moment, quietly enough, but with our hearts full of angry passions.

But no living creature, canine or human, could have resisted the happy influence of that soft and smiling morning. The moist blue haze was just lifting from the meadows and melting under the glad warmth of the summer sun. A sweet, earth-scented freshness seemed to rise from the dewy turf and to fill the very flowers and trees with the joy of living. From time to time, the stupid, tender-eyed cattle lifted their heads and sniffed the morning air. Whilst so merrily rang the music of the birds that it excited even the admiration of the stable-cat who was gazing with hungry tenderness at the little choristers beyond her reach.

"Jock," I barked, with sudden inspiration, "Jock, let's leave the Humans to take care of themselves. Let's go hunting."

Up bounded Jock in an instant, then pulled himself together remembering his dignity and importance as a sports-dog.

"Didn't know you were a 'sport,'" he said, lowering his chin coquettishly to the ground and vainly endeavouring to stop the joyous wagging of his tail.

"I'm not, Jock," I replied, "I'm not, but I *must* take violent exercise to work the 'Chihuahua' off my mind."

Jock gave a wild whoop.

"Hurrah! Come on!" And off we went with a rush—Jock at a long, striding gallop and I after him in leaps and bounds. The fresh morning breeze swept over our faces and through our coats, and filled us with life and vigour. I flew at Jock's throat in an ecstasy of exhilaration. Jock rolled me over and over, but I was up in an instant and after him again. Away we bounded through the long meadow grass, bathing our coats in the crystal dew, away up the hillside, skirting the Winthorpe Farm, and scattering dismay through a flock of cackling Winthorpe geese. Onward we dashed into the Winthorpe woods beyond, barking derisively at the

crazy, worm-eaten notice-board, which in half-obliterated characters threatened the "strictest rigour of the law" to Human trespassers and "Death" to dogs. Onwards, through the thick underwood and spreading bracken, onwards over the open stretches of velvet moss, snapping in wantonness at the dancing sunbeams that shimmered through the trees, or at some rolling leaf that fluttered in the wind. Onwards, still onwards to the open ; onwards, up the hillside to the moor. Oh ! the balmy freshness of the air as we scampered away through the purple heather, away through the waves of gorse and bramble until at last we flung ourselves panting upon a piece of turf, sweet with the odour of thyme, too breathless and exhausted to do aught but hang out our tongues and look at each other and grin.

Fortunately, we dogs have powers of telepathy unknown to Humans and can readily communicate with each other by more subtle methods than speech.

"What a glorious run !"—"What a magnificent run !" we telepathed to each other.

And so it had been. We had chased some hundreds of bunnies, although we had caught none. This rather pleased me than otherwise, for though I enjoy hunting a rabbit and giving him a friendly nip of the tail, when occasion serves and my legs are quick enough,

I don't like to see the defenceless, inoffensive little beasts gripped in the back and thrown up in the air as Jock deals with them. That's one thing I can't understand in some Humans, who in all other respects may be civilised and even gentle, their love of what they call "sport." "Sport!" with no possibility of danger to the hunter, with no chance of escape to the hunted. "Sport" to stand laughing in the warm sunshine at Monte Carlo, or at Hurlingham under the patronage of Royalty, and to shatter to pieces bewildered pigeons as they escape from the cramped confinement of airless traps to fly out into the open vault of the heavens. "Sport" to shoot down by thousands the wild birds of the sea, as they float twixt the blue of the sky and ocean, leaving them lifeless, to rot on the surface of the waves, or after days of untold suffering to be cast up as so much sensitive refuse on the shore. These were the thoughts that flashed through my mind, but happily only for a moment. The sense of physical fatigue overpowered us and we fell asleep.

The rays of the sun were tinged with amber and were casting long shadows on the hillside, as we trotted homewards late in the afternoon. I still felt rather tired and stiff, which was not unnatural. My thoroughbred legs were short, almost to stumpiness,

and I had to take twice as many steps as Jock to cover the same ground. Jock, however, was in the wildest spirits, "just in the humour," he said, "for a piece of devilment." The opportunity soon occurred. The gully down which we were scampering ended in an open expanse of moorland. On the right was a little hut, it could hardly be called a cottage, surrounded by a small piece of cultivated land in which two Humans were working, a man and a woman. But what attracted Jock's attention was a flock of sheep which was penned in an enclosure of wooden fences some three hundred yards away.

"Now for a scramble!" he barked; "now I'll show you the way to worry the sheep!"

"Take care what you do, Jock," I yelped after him. "There are Humans at the cottage."

But Jock heard nothing; he was mad with excitement. Away he dashed and had almost reached the sheep-pen by the time that I veered off towards a piece of ground, close to the hut, that commanded a better view; I was filled with a vague sense of danger. The man was evidently watching Jock. He had put down his spade and seemed to be muttering curses to himself as he wiped the sweat from his brow. I crept forward stealthily to get within earshot, and to have a better view of my friend. Jock

was just reaching the wooden fence, which he cleared at a bound. It was as the explosion of a bomb in a crowded thoroughfare. Away started the silly, frightened animals to right and to left, scrambling and tumbling over each other in their vain endeavour to escape. Away dashed Jock after them, barking his heart out with delight, and together with the hysterical bleating of the sheep turning the place into a veritable Pandemonium. It was impossible not to be amused, and I found myself wagging my tail and chuckling at the scene with contemplative satisfaction. I could not but admire Jock's skill in his professional work, and I fancied that once or twice he turned his head round to see if I was watching him. At last, tired of the general havoc he had created, he seemed to act with the set purpose of collecting the whole flock into one corner of the pen. He accomplished this with marvellous generalship and dexterity. It was a sight for the gods! The outer ranks of the bewildered sheep jostled and hustled each other as for dear life, whilst those within were so jammed and crushed as to clamber on to each other's backs and dash themselves against the wooden fence in their frantic endeavours to escape. The result might have been expected—the fencing gave way with a crash, and the terrified animals poured pell-mell on to the

open moor, as waters escaping from a dam. At this moment a sibilant sound as of half-muttered Human curses attracted my attention to the man and woman whose presence I had forgotten. I turned my head to watch them. The man was speechless with a passion which gave a grey hue to his face, even through the bronze of his freckled skin. A thin streak of saliva trickled from his mouth as it twitched spasmodically to frame the inarticulate curses that rose to his lips. I cowered to the ground, and watched and trembled. At last, his passion found vent.

“Curse ’im!” he cried, “curse ’im! Ah’ll flog the ’ide off ’iz back! By God, ah’ll maim ’im! Fetch me th’ ’orse-wheep. Don’ ta yeer, tha slut? Mak’ haste oor mebbe thou’ll taste it o’er tha own shoulders.”

The woman, a frail, careworn creature, glanced up at him for a moment with her large eyes, as if about to speak, shuddered a little, and then moved heavily and silently into the house. At this moment Jock’s joyous bark sounded clearly through the still, evening air. As he was approaching the place where we stood, he stopped, sniffed suspiciously, and tried to cross the surrounding marsh-land to his right. The man, maddened by the thought that the dog might escape, uttered a volley of oaths and ran into the

hut. In less than a minute he reappeared, a fowling-piece in his hand, his wife following him.

"Dunnot be a fule, John," she was saying, "th' doog belongs to Squere Fielden wot's let 'iz house to th' Lunnon folk. Thou'lt be sorry fa' this."

"Damn Squere Fielden!" replied the man, "th' doog is mad, an' mad doogs shud be shot—an' doogs as give me a day's labour for nowt shal' bea shot, mad or not."

He walked within a few paces of the place where I was crouching, paralysed with fear. Jock lumbered on towards us, finding the bog impassable. He came within range. Suddenly my heart gave a great leap within me, the choking lump in my throat seemed to break, and, head in air, my pent-up emotion spent itself in one long, dismal, eerie howl. The man started violently, and the fowling-piece fell from his grasp. He picked it up, muttering an oath, and cocked the hammer with his thumb. The woman timidly arrested the movement.

"Dunnot, John," she whispered hoarsely, "*dunnot*—th' little 'un ha' dun nowt."

He pushed her roughly away and raised the gun to his shoulder. There was a moment's silence—it cannot have been more than a moment—though to me it seemed a century. The picture is photographed on

my brain. The muzzle of the gun covered me, I could just catch the glint of the barrel beyond as it flashed golden in the rays of the setting sun ; I could see the man's forefinger twitch nervously as he tried to steady it on the trigger. Something within warned me not to attempt to run away, or to make any sudden movement. Something, I know not what, forced me to raise myself slowly, almost with solemnity, and to beg for my life in the same way as I had learned to beg for anything I wanted from a Human Being. The memory of how my master first taught me flashed across my mind, and I trembled a little. I knew how he would miss me.

What struck me as strange, as I turned my head on one side to look through the plaited locks that covered my eyes, and braced up my paws under my chin—my custom when sitting up—was that the man seemed to be almost imitating my position as he stood grasping his weapon in his arms and bending his head over it to take a more deliberate aim. Thus, face to face, in the same attitude, our eyes met over the muzzle of the gun. For a moment I did not breathe. My soul seemed to gaze into his. Suddenly his face was lightened by some fantastic thought as a grey landscape by the sun escaping from a cloud. He broke into a roar of laughter and flung the gun upon

the ground. I was safe! Why or how I did not know, but I felt that I was safe. He laughed and laughed again. Why, I could not tell; any more than why the woman was wiping her eyes with her apron. I moved slowly away, twisting my body into knots with suppressed delight, and wagging my tail furtively so as not to appear too sure of my reprieve.

* * * * *

An hour or so later Jock and I trotted quietly along the carriage-drive that led up to the front of our kennel. The evening was quite dark, but the curtains were not drawn, and a cheerful light from the dining-room seemed to welcome us home. We peeped in through the windows.

The table was laid for dinner and was bright with flowers and ferns, and candles with many-tinted shades. Glasses and plates were half-full, chairs were all awry, the room was empty. What did it mean? We hurried to the front door, which was open, and silently trotted into the hall. Around the centre table, under the rays of the great hanging-lamp, the whole company of Humans was assembled, the ladies stretching out their hands to touch Something on the table in their midst, the men craning over their shoulders or standing on chairs to gaze at the Something which I could not see. They were all

in ecstasies of delight. From the drawing-room floated the strains of a weird melody which Mr. Singwell was thundering out of the piano as "The National Anthem of Mexico." I became conscious of a strange animal perfume, the truth flashed upon me in a moment: the greatest calamity of all had befallen us—

The "Chihuahua" had arrived!



"Mr. Singwell was thundering out of the piano 'The National Anthem of Mexico.'"

CHAPTER II

A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER

IT was not until he had been placed in triumph in the centre of the dining-room table that, by jumping on to an adjoining chair, I obtained my first good view of the "Chihuahua" dog. Up to that moment I had thirsted for his blood, but when I first caught sight of the little monstrosity, cocking his wee head over the rim of the Mexican cigar-box in which he had travelled so many thousands of miles, and half-pathetically, half-saucily contemplating the company at large, I felt for a moment that strange wave of emotion which so often accompanies the admiration of pluck. He had clambered up on a ball of straw in one corner of the diminutive kennel and, with a tiny, stumpy, baby paw resting on each side of the cigar-box, gravely eyed the audience as an orator preparing to make a speech. He looked

the oddest, wee-est, waywardest, most whimsical little doglet in the world.

"Silence for the Chihuahua!" exclaimed Miss Bretford. "The Chihuahua desires to make a few remarks."

"Silence for the Chihuahua!" shouted the whole company.

At the repetition of the word "Chihuahua," the little creature turned his head towards Miss Bretford, one eye, which was watery and half-closed with a cold, regarding her with a pained and questioning expression of surprise; and the other, clear and bright, and twinkling with whimsical humour at something which appealed to his sense of the ridiculous.

"The dog is hurt at your ribald conversation; he is positively crying," said Miss Bretford, catching the one eye.

"No," replied Letitia who, from where she was sitting, could only see the other, "he is labouring over an impromptu joke, as Mr. Singwell does over night."

At this moment the Chihuahua lost his balance and, after a vain but heroic attempt to cling on with his front paws, collapsed in a heap from one side of the box, only to reappear with renewed energy and



"I obtained my first good view of the Chihuahua."

determination at the other, and to find himself face to face with Dr. Coghlan, whom he regarded with signs of the greatest interest and approbation.

Dr. Coghlan adjusted his glasses and examined the Chihuahua as he might a pathological specimen.

"I think," he said gravely, after a pause, "that the animal is suffering from some ophthalmia in one eye. The conjunctiva is distinctly congested. I am of opinion, too," he continued, addressing his hostess, "that the dog's restlessness may be caused by the sensation of hunger, and that he is at present, after his own Mexican lights, asking for food."

Mrs. Flufton Bennett laid down her knife and fork in mock despair.

"Isn't that like me? Here am I doing everything I can to make our new guest at home, and at the same time actually starving him to death!"

Humans have many proverbs on the subject of there being "two sides to a shield" and "two sides to every case," but they often forget that there are two sides to every dog, the *outside* and the *inside*, and that while the outside is the more interesting to them, the inside is far more important to *us*.

"Poor little Petkins!" continued Mrs. Bennett, breaking a biscuit and holding a piece out to the Chihuahua, "was ums starved?"

The "Petkins" may have been starved or not, but although he wagged his tail (which he did much after the manner of an English dog) in recognition of the polite intention and gentle voice of the speaker, he evidently did not hold with biscuits. He sniffed at it with a faint show of interest, distrustfully took a small portion in his mouth, held it despairingly for a moment with an obvious sense of duty, attempted to chew it, and finally dropped it with an apologetic smile.

"Poor darling!" said Mrs. Bennett, in a really distressed voice. "He's too hungry to be able to eat."

This remark was received with derisive cheers.

"Try him with this," said Singwell, cutting a delicious tit-bit of duck off his own plate.

My mouth watered as I watched the dainty morsel passed on. Jock growled. But the "Chihuahua" would have none of it. It was hot, and I observed with delight that it burnt the end of his nose.

"This is really serious!" exclaimed Mrs. Bennett. "What is to be done?"

"He wants one of his native dishes, of course," piped Letitia with asperity. "Give him some 'Tortiljos.'"

"Or some curried 'Tomalies.'"

"Or some snails on toast," said Singwell.

"I should suggest," said Dr. Coghlan, seriously, seeing his hostess was really distressed, "that you try a little warm bovril."

"Oh, thank you, Dr. Coghlan. How nice it is to have a doctor on the premises."

Jock and I felt sick with anger as we witnessed this ridiculous excitement over an insignificant cur.

The bovril appeared—a delicious cup of warm bovril, which Jock, or preferably I, would have lapped up with pleasure. But no, this was not good enough for my Lord, the "Chihuahua"; he took a few tongue-fulls and then turned disappointedly away.

"It's too hot," said Singwell, with an unsympathetic levity that delighted me, "cool it with a little port wine. It improves the flavour." So saying, amidst general protestations, he filled up the cup from a decanter and proffered it to the "Chihuahua."

The result was not expected—not even by the Humans—and certainly not by myself. The "Chihuahua" cocked up his ears for the first time, as the steam of the wine-poisoned bovril reached his nostrils. He bent his nose over it, took a long sniff of delight, lapped it up with avidity, and proceeded to lick the cup in the hope of squeezing some more out of its sides.

Mr. Singwell gave a dry cough.

“I do not wish, Mrs. Bennett, to cast any aspersions upon the character of one of your guests, but I gravely fear that into a hitherto innocent and untainted circle, you have introduced in the ‘Chihuahua’ dog a person of intemperate habits.”

“Not at all,” interposed Dr. Coghlan. “The instinct of the animal—an animal we know to be possessed of unusual intelligence—has overcome its natural distaste for alcohol, in recognition of its stimulating influence upon the gastric glands.”

These differences of opinion produced no effect at all upon the subject of discussion. The “Chihuahua” seemed restored to the best of spirits, and greedily devoured everything that was offered him, whilst Jock and I looked on with jealous eyes.

“If you will allow me, Mrs. Bennett,” said Singwell towards the end of dessert, “I should like to make a practical test of our royal guest’s character, and to decide as to the correctness of my opinion as opposed to that of my learned and scientific friend on my right. I should like to offer the ‘Chihuahua’ a glass of champagne.”

After some discussion the test was admitted, on Mrs. Bennett’s stipulation that if the puplet exhibited alcoholic tendencies he should not be allowed to take more than half a glass.



“‘I congratulate you,’ telepathed Jock to me.”

The "Chihuahua" sniffed at the wine with apparent interest, attempted to lap it, sneezed violently, and retired.

"I told you so," said Dr. Coghlan.

"Not at all," replied Singwell, "it only means that sparkling wines are not popular in Mexico."

There was not the slightest doubt that Mr. Singwell's scent and perception were keener than Dr. Coghlan's. I could see no signs of "superior intelligence" on the part of the little monstrosity, whilst it was perfectly obvious that he was inordinately fond of alcohol, which every decent dog loathes and despises. My jealousy had already grown into well-developed hatred, but it was not only my hatred but my perceptions that forced me to regard the Chihuahua as a suspicious character. I had been watching him very carefully, and the more I had watched him the more I had been driven to the conclusion that he was not, as the Humans believed, a fully developed dog of three years of age, but a puppy stunted in his growth. How young a pup I didn't know—I had never seen a pup like him; "but," thought I to myself, "I'll be muzzled if he doesn't *grow*, and every ounce he grows in weight he will fall a pound in the Humans' estimation." My meditations were interrupted by cries of delight from the table—

"We'll take the whole crowd," shouted Letitia. "Read it again, Mr. Singwell."

"The Corn Exchange, Barnham. On Wednesday, September 1st, will be held the great annual Dog Show.'" Jock and I pricked up our ears anticipating trouble. "'A special feature of the show will be the collection of 'Chow-Chows,' 'Schipperkes,' and other foreign dogs. Entries will close on August 28th.' There! Mrs. Bennett," continued Singwell, "there's a chance for the 'Chihuahua.'"

A thrill of delight went through me; if the Chihuahua was a pretender he would be discovered and exposed. My happiness was cut short by my "Pa" saying—

"Hett shall go too; I'll wash and comb her every day until the Show."

"I congratulate you," telepathed Jock to me, with a sardonic grin.

"And I'll write to Mr. Fielden," said Mrs. Bennett, "and ask his permission to take Jock."

"The same to you, Jock, and many of them," I replied.

Everybody (but ourselves) agreed it would be tremendous fun.

"I will go and write the letter at once," continued Mrs. Bennett, "and enter the dogs' names. We will



"The same to you, Jock, and many of them."

all drive over in the drag and we must leave here punctually at nine, so you lazy ones take warning."

The ladies shifted in their chairs preparatory to retiring to the drawing-room. Mr. Singwell rose with profound gravity—

"Mrs. Flufton Bennett," he said, "before concluding this most interesting ceremony of welcoming, after a dangerous and fatiguing journey, our royal guest (for in view of his regal appetite, his alcoholic tendencies, and his patronage of such aristocratic diseases as ophthalmia, we cannot doubt that he is royal), before concluding, I say, the ceremony of welcoming a royal guest to these shores, I think it only right, that having given him a local habitation, we should proceed, in view especially of the approaching Dog Show, to give him a name. Our royal friend now sleeps peacefully in our midst, I will not say in a state of positive inebriation, but at least sufficiently under the influence of alcohol as to make me feel that I can speak frankly. The first name that suggests itself to me as adapted to his royal capacity is that of 'Multum in Parvo,' which would be a lasting testimonial to his skill of putting much into little. A popular trick with conjurors is that of taking many bulky articles out of a small bag which is empty. What is this compared with this little dog's skill of putting many bulky

articles into a small bag, which is full? But 'Multum in Parvo' is not a convenient name, nor is it dignified. A more fitting one, I think you will agree with me, Mrs. Bennett, will be found in a reference to the dog's exalted origin and breed. Chihuahua dog," continued Mr. Singwell, solemnly addressing the monstrosity in the cigar-box, and wetting his head with a few drops of champagne, "I christen thee 'His Majesty, King of Chihuahua.' Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in drinking his Majesty's health. Three cheers for the success of the King of Chihuahua! Ladies and gentlemen, musical honours, if you please."

*

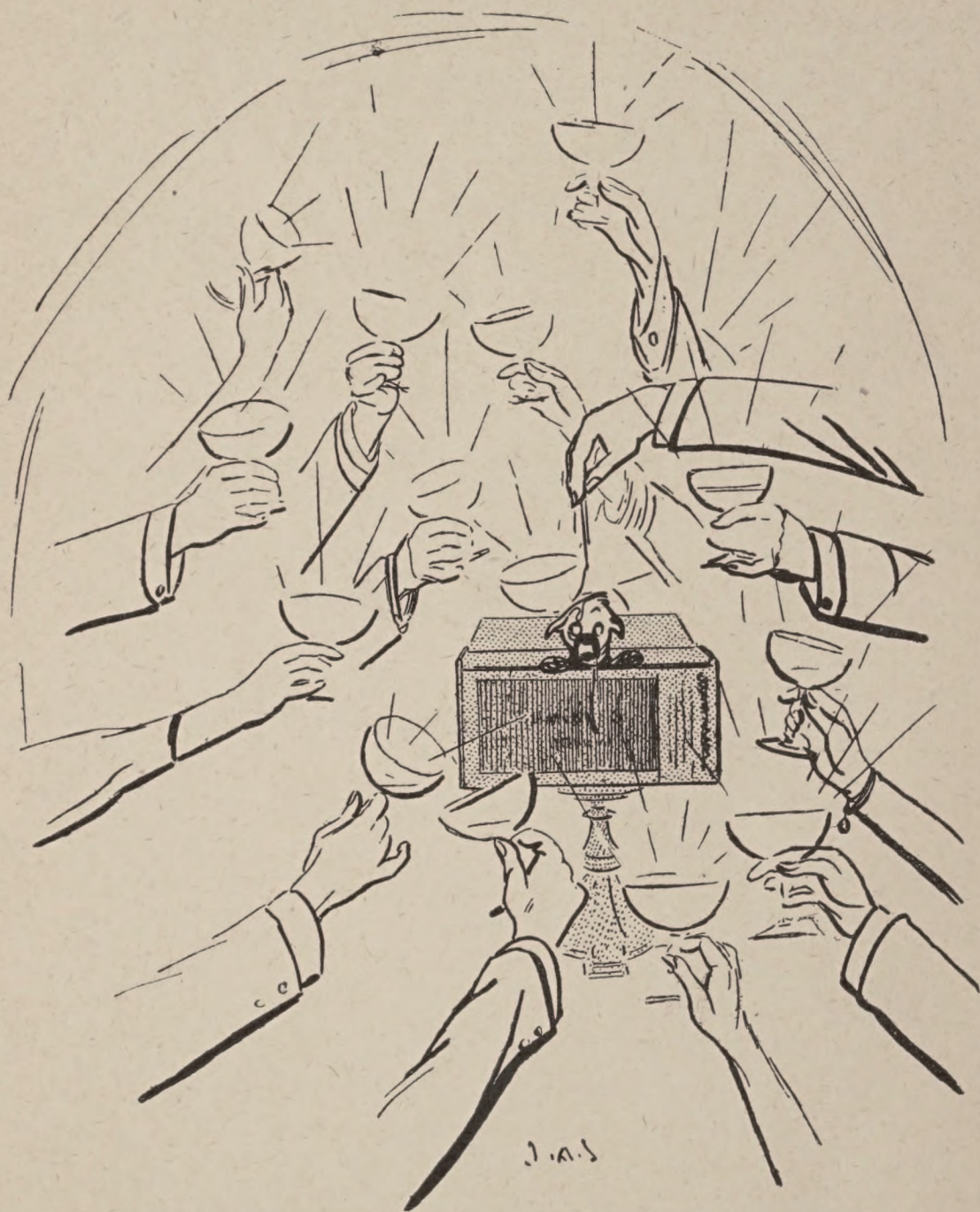
*

*

*

*

It was the musical honours that finished me. The boisterous and discordant strain of "He's a jolly good fellow!" hurt and bewildered me. I slipped from my chair and, creeping to my master's side, laid my head caressingly upon his feet. He did not notice me. I gently touched his knee with my paw, begging him for a word of kindness and recognition. But he was standing up, glass in hand, and singing, lost to all else but the Chihuahua dog. Then, with a choking feeling in my throat, I stole silently from the room, and up the stairs, through the long corridor until I reached my master's bed, and curled myself up at its foot.



"I christen thee 'His Majesty, King of Chihuahua.'"

The room was dark and cheerless, and as the swell of the distant refrain broke at times through the cold silence, it filled me with a burning sense of injustice and despair. I could not rest. I twisted and turned and twisted, until at last Nature was kind, and my heart—seeming to break with the fulness of its sorrow—sobbed itself to sleep.

CHAPTER III

“WOT IF I AIN’T?”

THE next morning Jock and I were up betimes. We had both passed miserable nights and felt thoroughly wretched, but we each tried to conceal it from the other. It is easy enough to cock one's ears and to caper about with a fictitious gaiety, but the Tail, the Tell-Tail, as it ought to be called, the Tail has a personality of its own (hence the capital T), and always gives us dogs away. It is commonly accepted by humans that the Tail belongs to the Dog, and not the Dog to the Tail. The utter indifference to my behests displayed, on certain occasions, by my own Tail leads me to suppose that Tails originally were independent organisms of a parasitic nature and grafted themselves on our forefathers and other vertebrata, much as the mistletoe upon the oak. As I explained to Jock, if this theory were correct, the subsequent evolution of the Tail would vary

inversely with the intelligence of the animal to which it was attached. This is exactly what we find. Humans, in their mental and physical superiority, managed to reduce their parasite Tails to a rudimentary condition, in fact, to wag them off altogether. Perhaps we shall accomplish the same thing in time. Other small-brained animals, as the eel and all forms of snakes, have proved less resisting hosts, and have been swallowed up by their parasitic *attachés* until they are Tail and nothing else. I have been told by a farm-dog from "The Cape" that among the sheep there, the Tails have altogether the best of the situation and leisurely recline on little carts which they compel the sheep to pull. My opinions on this matter are based on observation of my own Tail which, although anatomically related to me, is characterised by its perfect independence of spirit, when its services are enlisted in support of any form of fraud. When I feel happy my Tail almost wags me off my legs, but when I *pretend* to be happy, it flops about with as much spirit as a wet flag on a still day. If I only had my Tail under control I should be the most successful and charming liar in the world, but when I have to be civil to any one I don't like, however my other members may express themselves, the welcome of my Tail is as shallow as the society

smile of a Human. It is doubtless the diversity of the movements of our Tails when engaged in conversation that suggested to Humans the idea of flag-signalling in the army. Often, when in the Park with my "Pa," have I watched the red-coats wagging their little flags about, but for all their wagging they never looked a bit happy, nor, I believe, did they understand one half of what their wagging meant. Tails are not fashionable with some of us, and it is as common for fox terriers to have theirs removed in infancy as it is for Human pups to be vaccinated. For all that, I'll wager my last biscuit that a fox terrier will express more with the stump of his Tail in a minute than a military Human will with his flag in an hour. This may be called wagging in Short Tail, a process analogous to writing in Short Hand. However, I will leave the subject of my Tail and return to that of my story.

Jock and I slouched out into the garden in a fairly pitiable plight.

We were scratched and ragged and torn after yesterday's adventure, and our long coats were still plaited in cakes of mud.

"Good morning, Hett."

"Good morning, Jock."

"I feel just splendid to-day ; how are you ?"

"Awfully jolly, Jock," I replied, "quite awfully jolly."

But it was no good, we could only pretend not to notice each other's discomfiture, and direct an unusually critical attention to the shrubs and trees around to see if they had been guilty of acquiring a new aroma during the night. We were both bursting to



"Good morning, Hett."

speak of our common enemy, but we neither of us knew how to begin. We felt as shy as two young pups—or even three young pups.

"What are we to do," at last broke out Jock, "what are we to do with that infernal Chihuahua dog?"

"Well, Jock," I replied, "there's one thing you

must *not* do. You must *not* wait your chance, give him a nip in the back, and toss him into the middle of the duck-pond."

"I never thought of that," said Jock, his tail giving the first genuine wag of the morning.

"*Don't* think of it, Jock, don't consider how *easy* it would be during the course of the day, after lunch for instance, when the Humans are occupied with their cigarettes, to grip his little back firmly, lift him out of his kennel, and drop him in the Winthorpe Woods. Don't think of it, Jock, I implore you—at least—not yet."

But Jock evidently did think of it, and lolled his great red tongue out of his grinning mouth, which slobbered with anticipatory delight.

"My idea," I continued, "is that if we give him a little time the 'Chihuahua' will drink himself to death."

"Not he," barked Jock contemptuously, "he's used to it. Do you know old 'Towser,' the mongrel who keeps 'The Green Man's Arms,' whose father was a cross between a Dachshound and a French Poodle, and whose mother, a Pomeranian, evidently a dog with a past, threw back in so comprehensive a manner, that 'Towser' is an epitome of the worst fault of nine distinct breeds?—well, he's drunk hard

for the last eight years, always lapping at the little cups that hang under the beer-taps, and he's no worse for it."

"Well, Jock, if the Chihuahua doesn't do for himself that way, he may in another. He may *grow*."



"Jock cocked his ears."

Jock stopped in the middle of one of his vigorous scratchings and cocked his ears.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"I mean this, Jock," I continued, putting my nose close to his, "and don't go blabbing to all the dogs in the village, I have a very strong suspicion that *he may not be a Chihuahua dog at all*."

"What!" roared Jock, with a bark that made my

ears ring, "he comes from Chihuahua anyhow, the



Before the bath.

Copyrighted June 8, 1899.

'she-cat' " (this was Jock's name for Letitia) "translated a Mexican label on the box."

"The *box* comes from Chihuahua, Jock, there's no doubt about that, but it isn't always dog - biscuit that

you find in the dog-biscuit box, as you discovered the other day when you cut your nose on the broken tumbler that had been packed as a specimen."

"Well—I'll—be—muzzled!" said Jock, deliberately.

"I hope not, Jock, at least not before the Dog Show, which, we must not forget,



In the bath.

Copyrighted June 8, 1899.



After the bath.

Copyrighted June 8, 1899.

takes place next week."

In truth, we had no opportunity of forgetting.

It makes my tail droop and my eyes smart even now to recall the me-

mory of those following days. Between the baths, most of my day was occupied in cursing the Human who invented soap. If Mr. Pear or Mr. Cleaver had appeared in the grounds they would have had a bad quarter of an hour. I spent so much time in the wash that I wonder I was not lost there. But my master kept such a strict eye on me that it



Toilet complete.

Copyrighted June 8, 1899.

would have been difficult for me to have got mislaid even in a steam laundry. I saw nothing of Jock, for he was going through a course of maltreatment similar to mine under the care of Higgins, the coachman, in the stables. But one day I managed to slip round to him and found him chained to his kennel, and in a great state of excitement.

“What do you think?” he said. “Higgins and the gardeners have heard from the kitchen about the Chihuahua’s habits, and every day Mrs. Bennett’s maid brings the little beast out here, and they fill him up with lumps of sugar, soaked in gin. He was as drunk as a Human here, yesterday afternoon, and offered to fight me, staggering up to me and swearing in the most awful language and the most awful accent I ever heard. Directly he got within reach of my chain, Higgins pulled him back by his tail, until the Chihuahua positively screamed with fury and the Humans with laughter. You never saw such a sight in your life.”

I was glad to hear about the sugar—sugar would make the Chihuahua fat. But, on the other hand, I had heard that gin given to the pups of any kind of animals, Canine, Human, or otherwise, kept them small. It seemed to me very probable that it was in this way the Chihuahua dog had become the



“He offered to fight me.”

dipsomaniac he undoubtedly was. Being so tiny at birth as to be remarkable, he may have been plied with alcohol by some Human anxious to preserve his peculiarity, and have thus got used to its detestable taste and smell even before he opened his eyes. The whole thing was a mystery. Here was a letter from Pa's hostess' friend, Mr. Anthony, promising to send a Chihuahua dog under the personal care of his brother. Here was a Mexican cigar-box, which had undoubtedly come from Chihuahua, and here was a drunken little dog inside. It seemed madness to question his identity, and yet, picturing him to myself, as I had seen him the night before, it was impossible for me to believe that he was full grown, that he had a drop of good blood in his veins (or in his arteries for that matter), that he was derived from any respectable stock, either British or foreign; in fact, that he was anything but a shrivelled, ill-developed, stunted mongrel. A mongrel pup. A thorough-bre'd mongrel. A pup of three or four months at the most. I couldn't tell which. He was such a freak of nature in himself, and had so lowered his caninity that it was impossible to judge of him by any ordinary rules. Suddenly Jock, reading my thought, interrupted me.

"Oh! he's a Chihuahua all right enough. He

spoke with a foreign accent. And I never heard such oaths. They must have been Mexican."

But I hadn't much respect for Jock's knowledge of foreign accents. All accents were foreign to Jock, except Scotch. The thing I wanted to do was to have a good talk with the Pretender and to judge for myself. But it seemed as if I should never get the opportunity. Royalty itself could not have received more attention than we got from the Humans in these days of preparation for the Show. Of course, with the exception of the baths, it was all very flattering and right and proper. But after a while it became extremely boring. My feelings were a mixture of those of a prize dog of princely value being trained for a special ceremony, and of a cur, who was being watched for signs of latent hydrophobia. Or as Humans might put it, I hardly knew if I were a royal personage travelling in state, or a ticket-of-leave man under police surveillance. However, the day before the Show arrived at last. I underwent my last bath and my last combing, and with a sore skin and a sensation of being painfully and unpleasantly clean, with a blue ribbon round my neck, I presented myself on the lawn for parade, to be admired by the Humans. Jock and the Chihuahua were there too. Jock looked splendid, with his



On parade.

beautiful long glossy coat, all freshly combed and brushed. Until then I had had no idea he was such a fine fellow. As for the beastly little Chihuahua, he was squatting, clean and perky and as impudent as ever, in a Japanese basket, lined with yellow satin, and staring at everybody as if he were the monarch of the universe. Round his neck was a pink ribbon with a silver bell, which at intervals he made furious but futile endeavours to remove. As usual, he looked thoroughly intoxicated ; in fact, as I learned from Jock afterwards, he had just been round to Higgins for his customary afternoon debauch. We sat there in the sun, the Humans smoking their cigarettes, and admiring us in a becoming manner. Now at last occurred the opportunity I had been looking for. A servant came on to the lawn and gave Mrs. Bennett a letter.

"Oh, that's delightful," she said, after reading it. "The new cob has arrived ; let's all go and interview him. Here, Vivian, just chain Jock up to that seat so that he cannot eat 'His Majesty'."

I peeped out from the centre of the fluffy ball of wool, into which the repeated washings had transformed me, and observing an expression of doubt on my master's face, pretended to be asleep. He hesitated a moment, and then followed the other

Humans, who were already disappearing round the corner of the house.

The Chihuahua was snoring loudly in a drunken sleep. There was no time to be lost. Resting one paw on the edge of the basket, I stiffened the other and brought it down with a good swinging side-stroke just on 'His Majesty's' ear. He rolled over twice and then staggered on to his feet, but he was too drunk to manage his hind-legs, which collapsed in a heap under him, and supporting himself with difficulty on his front paws he looked up at my face with an expression of bewilderment and rage.

"Washwant?" he yapped.

I looked at him interrogatively.

"Washwant?" he repeated, in a shriller tone.

This sounded like Spanish. Jock was right, the dog was a Chihuahua after all.

"Washwant?" he yelled for the third time, and observing that I still sniffed at him with a silent and contemplative curiosity, he staggered to the side of his basket.

"Sheems to me," he said, "'t don't hunderstand wot I'm shaying. I shay, Washyouwant?"

At this outburst of drunken cockneyism any doubt as to the animal's origin vanished like a mouse down a hole.



J. G. S.

"Wot if I ain't!"

He was evidently a mongrel pup who had lived with the lowest of the low. I looked pityingly and condescendingly at Jock. He had made such a silly mistake with his talk of foreign accents and Mexican oaths, and—besides (my tail, thank goodness it had some sense of humour left, couldn't help wagging as I looked at him)—besides Jock was tied up. *He* couldn't interfere. I was the leading dog on this occasion.

"What do I want," I said, bending over the mongrel and showing my teeth; "well, I want to tell you what I think of you. You're a drunken little brute, you're a disgrace to caninity, you're a freak of nature—I don't believe you are a Chihuahua dog at all."

"Wot if I ain't?" screamed the little beast, actually sobering in his paroxysm of rage. "Wot if I ain't? Oo are you, I'd like to 'now, and your lumping sheep-dawg friend there? We 'ad 'eaps. o' dawgs like you w'ere I cum from. 'Eaps on 'em. An' d'you 'now w'ere that ish? Seven Dials, London. Menzies Bros., dealers in Live Stock, Seven Dials, London. Menzies ses 'e never saw a dawg like me, not in his 'ole bloomin' life. They drowned my sheven brothers becoz they was gals an' becoz Menzies ses they was a reflecshen on their mother's past. But 'e ses 'e'd keep me, 'coz I'd be a warnin' to my mother in the future,

and 'coz bein' as 'ow I was an eccentric, 'e might be able to sell me if 'e could only keep me small. 'E ses as 'ow I was a bloomin' museum of himperfections and yet 'ad'sich a way with me that I might carry 'em all hoff. An' 'e 'nowed a dawg wen 'e seed 'im, 'e did. 'E'd 'ave soon summed you up, you blamed Skye Terrier. 'E'd 'ave given a bob for yer and 'ave sold yer for a 'thick 'un,' and 'e wouldn't 'ave given a tanner for your sheep friend, 'coz 'e ain't got no manners."

The mongrel stopped for breath. Jock, wild with rage, was barking furiously. Again and again, with savage leaps and bounds, he dashed himself forward towards us, almost strangling himself in his collar and gradually dragging after him the garden-seat to which he was attached, until his hot breath reached the cur that so infuriated him. I saw the Humans turn the corner of the house and run towards us. The mongrel noticed nothing, but foaming at the mouth in his pigmy rage, he made frantic endeavours to climb over the side of his basket in the direction of Jock.

"Cum on, yer scurvy Scotch thief!" he yapped. "Cum on, yer bloomin' coward and kill me if yer like. That won't prove yer a better dawg than I am. Wy, I wouldn't fight with yer 'till yer got your 'air cut."

The next moment would have been "The Pretender's" last, had not he and his basket been

suddenly snatched up by the Humans, and Jock sent flying with a kick.

"Yah ! yer Scotch thief !" still yelled the mongrel, "yer didn't get me that time. Wait till to-morrow, yer clumsy sheep-catcher, and I'll show yer which is the better dawg of the two."

And finding they could not pacify him, the Humans carried him, still screaming, into the house.

CHAPTER IV

THE BARNHAM DOG SHOW

ALTHOUGH I have the antipathy to disclosing my real age which is common to all my sex, I am willing to confess that my girlhood is a thing of the past, and I cannot disguise from myself the fact that when accosted by a strange dog in the street, my deprecatory wriggle has lost much of its maiden charm. How long ago it is since I first became a mother I am unable to state with any exactness, but certainly long enough for me to be now not only a grandmother and a great-grandmother, but a grandmother qualified by an unlimited number of "greats." "Some are born great," the Humans say (but how one can be born a great-grandmother I never could understand), "and some have greatness thrust upon them." I can truthfully place myself in the latter category, never having experienced the slightest desire to be a mother, and never having taken the

faintest interest in my respective families beyond a passing sense of injured surprise at the appearance of the first. It is both annoying and embarrassing, having curled up in one's basket for the night, to awaken in the morning and find some six or seven other dogs to whom one has not even been introduced, perfectly blind to everything but their own comfort, and treating one with marked familiarity. When this sort of thing occurs on three or four occasions it tends to make a dog nervous about going to sleep at all, and to induce a feeling which an underbred Human would describe as "'e dunno where 'e are." The first time it happened to me I had grave suspicions that the basket had something to do with it: that having been used perhaps as a bran pie, it had acquired the habit, as it were, of producing odd things at odd moments; but these suspicions were not confirmed by subsequent experience. In one respect I have been fortunate as a mother, namely, that most of my families disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they came. The reader will pardon this digression in consideration of a mother's feelings. All I really wanted to say was that I am too advanced in years and too much of a matron to take any interest in Shows. Besides, I had been through it all before—not once but dozens of times. I had won prizes at the Aquarium and the

Crystal Palace, and to be exhibited at a Country Show in company with a crowd of "Foreign Dogs" was little short of humiliating. Such was our relief however, in being liberated from the hampers in which we had respectively been confined (a precautionary measure for the protection of the Chihuahua) that Jock and I immediately proceeded to swell the babel of sounds that was turning the Corn Exchange into a veritable Pandemonium. If noise and numbers constituted success, the "Great Barnham Annual Dog Show" might have been the greatest on record. Such a tumult of polyglot baying and snarling and howling and yelping, that the blood began to tingle in my veins with excitement, and in a few minutes I had barked myself hoarse.

The confusion is the only excuse I can make for my master managing to get on one side of a post whilst I was trotting energetically along on the other. This I very properly resented. Of course I was willing to make allowance for him in his excited condition, but to neglect seeing which side I was walking and then to try and credit me with the error was going a bit too far. Besides, I had strictly followed the Humans' rule of the road (which is posted up in all country towns where there is no traffic, but which is never seen or obeyed in the



“‘Voilà two!’ as I once heard a French poodle remark; ‘see the pair of us.’”

crowded thoroughfares of London), "Keep to the right." I never quite know how one is to tell which is the right, but I always keep there. I suppose one does it intuitively. If a thing wasn't right one would never keep to it. When I reached the post I chose what was obviously the right side, and my Pa foolishly chose the wrong one. "Voilà two," as I once heard a French poodle remark—see the pair of us.

"What number, sir?" said an official to my Pa, when I had finally extricated him from his dilemma.

"Skye, 81," gasped my Pa, looking at his ticket.

"Only twenty Skyes in the Show, sir," said the attendant.

"Oh, I beg your pardon; I was holding it upside down. I mean 18."

Stall No. 18 proved to be in an excellent position, at the central end of one of the many rows of kennels that converged on the judging ring. Next to me was a ladylike Skye (gentleman-like, I should have said, as I discovered afterwards) of a somewhat melancholy aspect.

"Rather noisy here this morning," I remarked, wishing to place myself on a friendly pawing.

"Oh, I'm used to it," was the reply. "I come here every year. There will be a discussion about me presently, as to whether I should have the second

prize ; there always is. Finally, I shall be very specially commended. I always am."

"I can't think why we have these Shows at all."

"Oh, it amuses the Humans. I would put up with a good deal to give them a little happiness. They are such dear creatures."

"Oh, they're all right," I replied ; "they mean well, but I don't believe they know a nice dog when they see him. One would think, from the assurance of these so-called judges that they had received a special inventory of a dog's 'points' from above, or had personally attended at the Creation."

"May I stroke your head, you darling little thing ?" a friendly female Human stopped and said.

"Certainly, certainly, ma'am," I wagged, "stroke anything you like," and I turned on my back and offered her my tummy. Humans always want to rub some part of a dog's anatomy, and, speaking for myself, the operation affords more satisfaction to the stomach than to the head. I am quite asinine in my dislike to having my ears pulled, whilst I think a little gentle massage to the abdomen aids the digestion.

On a Show day, if one is an attractive person, one is necessarily exposed to such an amount of patting and rubbing and stroking that if it were not for vary-

ing the surface presented for this attention, one's coat would get a hole worn in it.

So I offered her my tummer, but I did not offer it for long. Familiar voices in the crowd indicated that some of the people Jock and I had brought with us were struggling to approach. I was on my legs at once, and conveyed to my friendly female Human in as polite a manner as possible, that I had other business to attend to and that she had better "pass along."

"Let's have a look at the Skyes, Dr. Coghlan," I heard pretty little Miss Seaton say, "those Basset Hounds have nearly made me deaf."

"Resonant voices, haven't they?" drawled Dr. Coghlan. "We shall be quieter here."

"Looking for quiet places" was a favourite occupation of Dr. Coghlan's and Miss Seaton's. I had not wandered through the Winthorpe Woods every afternoon with them without learning their tastes and habits. Two and three hours would they sit together in a "quiet place," whilst I went off rabbiting. And here they were in a crowded Pandemonium of a Dog Show still looking for their "quiet place." Humans are pathetic animals!

"Oh, hang it!" suddenly snapped Dr. Coghlan, "that's my toe."

"I beg your pardon, sir, *I beg your pardon.*"

"Hullo, Higgins, is that you? Just the man I wanted to see—but not to—not to feel. Bless my soul, Higgins, you must weigh twelve stone."

"Very sorry, I'm sure, sir; I was pushed."

"All right, Higgins," continued Dr. Coghlan, fixing his eyeglass and resuming his natural drawl. "I wanted to ask you a question—How's our small friend?"

"The 'Shwawa', sir? Oh, he's all right, sir."

"Going to win a prize, Higgins?"

"Well, sir, it's like this, sir," said Higgins, approaching the doctor and becoming confidential, "'e's a real rummun, that dawg is. I suppose it's because he's a 'Shwawa,' and a thoroughbred Shwawa; not that I know anything about Shwawas, but what I *do* say is this, sir—no country would turn out a dawg like that and send him as a specimen unless he *was* thoroughbred. They daren't do it, sir."

"He's a wonderful dog, Higgins——"

"He's a marvellous dawg, sir—but this is the point, sir. The dawg's entered as being three years old, but he ain't, sir." And here Higgins' voice sank to a mysterious whisper. "He ain't two year old, nor yet a year, sir; 'e's only just getting his second teeth, sir."

"You at once interest and amaze me," said Dr. Coghlan, regarding Higgens with the utmost gravity.

"That's the word, sir, and thank you for it. It's amazin', sir, just amazin'."

"What will happen, Higgens?"

"Well, it's like this, sir—if they go into his teeth thoroughly, sir, as I have, they're sure to disqualify him as being wrongly entered, and I wouldn't have that happen for worlds, sir. The missis—Mrs. Bennett I mean, sir, begging your pardon—is real keen on gettin' a prize for that dawg, and I hope she may, sir—for I am bound to confess," continued Higgens, wiping his brow and becoming hot at the consciousness of his rhetorical effort, "I am bound to confess, sir, that you and Mrs. Bennett have always treated me as perfect gentlemen."

Dr. Coghlan did not reply, but there was a twinkle in his eye.

"Excuse me, sir," continued Higgens, "but I am rather nervous about this dawg. Mr. Johnson is the judge, sir—I know him well—and I don't think he is much acquainted with foreign dogs—and, worst of all, sir, Mr. Johnson has come this morning in an unusually sober condition. When he's sober he's shaky and when he's shaky he's irritable, and when he's

irritable—well, sir, then it's bad for the dawg he knows nothing of."

Dr. Coghlan seemed to prick up his ears at this. He took Higgins on one side. I could not quite catch what passed. I thought I heard the word "champagne," a drink which I believe is popular with Humans. He took something from his pocket and placed it in the hand of Higgins, who touched his hat and moved away.

"I'm glad that horrid man has gone," said Miss Seaton, as Higgins began edging his way through the crowd towards the judge's stand. This was by no means the first time I had heard her snarl at Higgins; "Horrid man," she used to mutter to herself when, as sometimes happened in the evening, Dr. Coghlan announced his intention of having a smoke with Higgins in the stable. On one of these occasions, as I was following Dr. Coghlan to the door, feeling more inclined to hunt rats than to enjoy the tender warmth of even Miss Seaton's lap (a lap, by the way, so luxurious and well-upholstered that it would have been an ornament to any dog's kennel); on one of these occasions she called me back and quite surprised me by hugging me violently in her arms and bursting into tears: "To leave me to go to Higgins," she whimpered. "You wouldn't, you little

darling, would you?" Of course I kissed her violently as an indication that not the finest rat in the world was as attractive as she was. "Higgins is a brute," she continued, "a perfect brute." I felt it was disloyal to Higgins, who was quite a docile and well-intentioned creature, but I wagged affirmatively. It is useless to argue with a female Human. One might as well try to worry an elephant or to grapple with an eel. "If he means anything, why doesn't he *speak!*" continued Miss Seaton, through her tears. I was not quite sure whether she referred to Higgins or Dr. Coghlan; but in either case the remark was superfluous. Humans are always speaking. I suppose they have no other method of communicating their emotions. They have no tails to wag, and they don't know—the majority of them—how to talk with their eyes. If they have nothing else to say they make obvious and generally deprecatory remarks about the weather. It is the one thing they can abuse without fearing an action for libel. The sole condition of affairs they seem to dread (which makes us dogs so companionable) is the relapsing into a sensible silence. I had always taken a great interest in Miss Seaton and Dr. Coghlan, and had honoured them with a good deal of my society. I confess I didn't quite understand them. They had a way of

looking into each other's eyes that was almost canine in its intelligence. They not infrequently snapped at each other when together, but if they had possessed tails I am quite certain they would have carried them in a very drooping manner whenever they were apart. I think this must have been what Dr. Coghlan meant when he remarked to her, "My dear, if we were always at a distance from each other we should become positively inseparable." I had heard Higgens speak of them in the stables. "Them two ought to run in double harness," Higgens once remarked. "They're running tandem at present," the under coachman replied. "The doctor is the leader, but the filly will be at his heels, however quick he goes."

On this abominable day of the Dog Show, there appeared to be some truth in the remark. Miss Seaton had followed Dr. Coghlan as faithfully as one of those dreadful spotted dogs follows the hind wheels of a coach. The doctor, I confess, seemed to like it.

"My dear friend," he replied to Miss Seaton's restriction on Higgens, "believe me, you are wrong; there is nothing 'horrid' about Higgens. He is the most ingenuous and most honest person in the world."

“Ingenuous! Honest!” laughed Miss Seaton. “Why, they tell me the man has actually served time!”

“It is true,” continued the doctor in his gravest and most convincing manner, “that Higgens was during a brief period of his early career confined within the walls of one of her Majesty’s prisons. This was doubtless an injustice. Higgens, in fact, assures me it was so. He confesses he committed a little ‘indiscretion,’ and that he returned the—the money directly—well, directly requested to do so. He appears to me to have pursued a very honourable course in the matter. After all, what is an ‘indiscretion’?—merely an error of judgment. What is an error of judgment compared to the deliberate cruelties and petty larcenies daily committed amongst the opulent and educated?”

“My dear Dr. Coghlan, what do you mean?”

“I mean that it would be the very making of most of you young ladies if you had to ‘serve time’ like Higgens had. I respectfully and regretfully include my esteemed friend and hostess, Mrs. Bennett. I would give you all seven days, I would give Miss Fretcher a month—my visit here is over in three weeks,” added Dr. Coghlan, *sotto voce*.

“But what for?” gasped Miss Seaton, momentarily

ceasing her perfunctory caresses of myself and turning her round eyes up at the doctor.

“For unpunctuality, madam—wanton, persistent, cold-blooded unpunctuality: the vice which is so particularly feminine and which has sapped the happiness of so many domestic circles. Do you realise what unpunctuality involves? It involves cruelty and theft. You and your friends daily keep eight starving men waiting for their dinner for any time up to half an hour. This is cruelty to the noblest sex of the noblest race of animals.”

“Always excepting dogs,” snapped Miss Seaton pointedly, and emphasising her remark with a caressing stroke of my head.

“Eight men and four domestics kept waiting for half an hour amounts to stealing six hours a day out of the lives of others. And yet you reflect on Higgins for having ‘served time.’ I regard Higgins as a noble example. He has erred, he has suffered, he has repented. Think of it! Higgins knows that he is never wanted for half an hour after the time for which he is called, but he is there to the moment—sunshine or rain. Talk of valour in the field—the hysterical expression of an emotional moment—it is such a man as Higgins who deserves the Victoria Cross. You speak with scorn of ‘serving time.’ To

my mind a month's hard labour ought to be part of every lady's and gentleman's education. These are the people who make a nation's greatness. Gad," continued the doctor, waxing warm with his own hyperbole, "Gad! if I were a rich man and had nothing else to do, I would wait outside the prisons' gates and watch for them as they came out. I would train them, I would educate them, I would make gods of them."

The little laughing dimples chased each other around Miss Seaton's pretty mouth, and the light flashed mischievously from her eyes.

"What are you thinking about?" asked the doctor, partly in answer to the silence and partly in answer to her expression.

"I was thinking," Miss Seaton said, pointing her saucy little chin in the air, "of the remark made by the dummy head at the Ventriloquial Show."

"Well, what was that, and how does it bear on the subject of prisons?"

"Oh, I had forgotten all about your new training school for the manufacture of 'gods,'" laughed Miss Seaton. "The remark referred to you."

"Well, what was it?"

Miss Seaton looked up in the doctor's face and

repeated demurely, but with emphasis, “‘ Oh, Captain Cole! what a *funny* man you are!’”

“But, my dear Miss Seaton, I assure you I was never more serious in my life. I feel deeply about these matters. Don’t you see that the splendid restrictions of prison life with its enforced labour, its regular habits, its compulsory asceticism, may be the very saving of a man’s soul?”

“And don’t *you* see,” retorted Miss Seaton, “that you are only funny because you are so serious?—because, as Mrs. Bennett puts it, because you ‘exist massively.’”

“Perhaps I had better seek the society of some one who will find me less funny and less massive,” snarled the doctor, almost savagely. The asperity of his growl made me growl too.

“You’re quite right, Hett,” said Miss Seaton, “he’s a rude man to speak in that tone of voice. You silly boy,” she continued, slyly transferring her caresses from my head to the hand of the doctor, who, not much to my edification or enjoyment, was absently plucking the hairs from my skin. “You silly boy, it is perhaps because you are so funny that I am so—so——”

Subsequent events have led me to suppose that Miss Seaton may have been going to add “so fond of

you ;” but the sudden reappearance of the original cause of her annoyance will make this ever remain a matter of conjecture.

At the sight of Higgens’ flushed and perspiring physiognomy she pouted visibly and turned her back.

“ It’s all right, sir !” exclaimed Higgens to the doctor in an excited whisper. “ I’ve done it, sir, I’ve done it ; ’e took the bait—I mean the champagne—like a samming, sir, and then I tickled his stomach—I mean his vanity—and that fairly fixed him. He lay in my arms and cooed like a sucking babe. Nothin’ like reachin’ a man through ’is vanity, sir. Ses I to ’im, ‘ Mr. Johnson,’ says I, ‘ pardon my mentionin’ it,’ says I, ‘ but an acquaintance of mine in the crowd has just said to me that he thought you didn’t know as much about dawgs as a judge oughter.’ ‘ Not know about dawgs !’ roars out old Johnson, ‘ not know about dawgs ! Why, I’ve been a judge of dawgs for twenty years. Every one knows my book on “ Our Dawgs and how to Treat Them.”’ ‘ Of course they do,’ says I, making him lap up his champagne and pouring out another glass, ‘ but my friend didn’t refer to English but foring dawgs.’ ‘ Why !’ shouts Johnson to this, ‘ I tell you, Higgens, I’ve seen more than any ten men in this county.’ ‘ Of course

you 'ave, sir, of course you 'ave,' ses I, 'and so I told my friend. "There ain't a dawg in the world," ses I, "as Mr. Johnson doesn't know the points of." "Well," says my friend, "there's one in the Show to-day that will flummux him." "And what may that be?" ses I. 'Well,' ses 'e, "it's a cur'ous sort of dawg to the English eye; it's a Mexican dawg. I lived in Mexico myself for twenty years, and I never saw a more perfect specimen." "And what's the breed called?" ses I. "The Chiwawa," ses 'e. "The what?" ses I. "The Chiwawa," ses 'e, and 'e spells it to me. 'C-h-i-w-a-w-a.' You see, sir," continued Higgens breaking off in his story and addressing himself to Dr. Coghlan, "I could tell from Johnson's face that he had never met such a dawg before, so I wanted to make him thoroughly familiar with its name and points."

"The intention was excellent, Higgens, though the spelling was, I believe, a trifle incorrect. Please finish your story, which interests me."

"Well, sir, there ain't much more to tell. I made my imaginary friend run over all the points of a Chiwawa, and I think I described 'His Majesty' over there pretty accurate. Law! I could see old Johnson trying to fix it in his mind all the time. 'Now, Mr. Johnson,' I concludes by saying, 'my

friend told me this dawg was the finest specimen of a Chihuahua 'e 'ad ever seen, and 'e ses, ses 'e, "Old Johnson will know nothing at all about it and probably only give the dawg a second prize." 'Now, Mr. Johnson,' ses I, 'this made me so mad that I ses to my friend, "That just shows what a fool you are, for now I come to think of it, I remember Mr. Johnson keeps a Chihuahua dawg hisself." And that s my only excuse, sir, for speaking to you about any dawg in the show, which ain't a correct thing to do. I wanted to know if you owned a Chihuahua or not.'

No, no!' ses 'e.' (Lor, Dr. Coghlan, what a lump of fat and vanity that man is!) 'No, no,' ses 'e, in quite a hairy manner, 'I don't *keep* a Chihuahua, Higgins, but I know the breed well, and your friend's description seems to me fairly accurate.' I could hardly keep the smile off my face. 'Mr. Johnson,' ses I, 'pardon my saying it, but you're a wonderful man, sir; to think that you should be acquainted with the points of all the dawgs in the bloomin' universe, just as if you had made them yourself.' 'Well, Higgins,' ses 'e, 'experience teaches a man everything—and I confess I have a natural hintuition on these subjects.'" Higgins wiped his brow and turned an interrogative glance upon the doctor, as if doubtful of the impression he had created.

“My dear Higgins,” said Dr. Coghlan, “both you and I would be quite incapable of practising a fraud upon any one” (Higgins shifted his feet uneasily) “or of trying to influence the opinion of any person occupying the sacred position of a judge. But it seems to me that the administration of champagne in this instance only restored Mr. Johnson, who, you tell me, was a bit shaky on his arrival, to his normal condition; that is to say, to a condition in which he is most qualified to accurately express his opinion as a judge. You have also supplied him with the necessary evidence in regard to the defendant—I should say the plaintiff. The dog, as we all know, comes from Mexico; I am not familiar with Mexico;—I believe it does not rank amongst the Great Powers, but, as you say, no country in the world is great enough or insignificant enough to grant a passport to a dog like that and a permit to cross the ocean unless it was the representative of a rare and particular breed. You have wandered, I fear, from the narrow path of truth in describing a hypothetical friend, but you have done it in a good cause. There are so many damnatory verdicts pronounced in this world, especially in the field of morals and art, merely through the ignorance of the judges. More than one man has been hanged on this account, and



"But sharp with her teeth."

more than one dog has lost a prize." I wagged a "Hear! hear!" but Dr. Coghlan did not notice it. "Higgins," he said, passing over a crisp but insignificant piece of paper which I could have worried in a few seconds, "here is a trifle for your expenses. If the Chihuahua gets a first prize, I will make it ten."

"Thank'ee, sir, thank'ee—as I said before, you and Mrs. Bennett have always behaved as perfect gentlemen."

"That's very good of you. Come, Miss Seaton," continued the doctor, "let us join the others; the judging is just going to begin."

I composed myself to sleep, but had hardly closed my eyes when I felt a severe pain in my ribs. I looked up to find myself being contemplated by a couple of the mangiest human mongrels, blue-skinned, greasy-coated, and collarless, it had been my misfortune to meet.

"Get up, kiddy, and show yourself," said one, driving his stick right under me and forcing me on my legs. "Eugh! I thought so—too long in the legs."

"Too short in the body," added the other, poking me in the back with his finger.

"But sharp with her teeth," I replied, and gave him a nip of which I hope he bears the marks to-day.

He was too frightened to growl. "Menzies would shoot that dawg," he said quietly, and then both passed on. I have the sweetest temper imaginable, but there are things I do not permit. Truly the Human, when he *is* a mongrel, is the worst mongrel in the world. This incident disturbed my dreams. I thought I was being drowned by my own master in the sea; he was holding my head under the waves whilst I struggled frantically to escape the ever-increasing sense of horror—I was losing consciousness—there was a dull humming in my ears—when suddenly I awoke to find myself safe and sound in the Barnham Dog Show.

The sea around me was a sea of Humans, struggling towards the judge's stand; the humming was the babel of human voices. Suddenly there was a general cry of 'Hush!' and out of the silence I could hear Dr. Coghlan's voice declaim: "Ladies and Gentlemen, Mrs. Bennett's Chihuahua dog, 'His Majesty,' has obtained a first prize, with the additional note that 'This is a remarkable specimen of a remarkable species.'"

An hour or two later we were hurried to the family omnibus ready to bear us home. The Chihuahua was carried in front of Mrs. Bennett in a silk-lined basket, in the manner of a heathen

god. Dr. Coghlan held the basket as Mrs. Bennett took her place.

“Dr. Coghlan,” she said, “that fat, greasy judge of course showed great discrimination and great knowledge of dogs, but do—do you think he was quite sober?”

Dr. Coghlan looked embarrassed.

“Excuse me, ma’am, for speaking,” said Higgens, who was holding the door open, “I am sure you will excuse me—but there is one fault I have to find with my esteemed friend, Mr. Johnson.”

“He was not sober, Higgens!” exclaimed Mrs. Bennett.

“He is a total abstainer, ma’am—a confirmed total abstainer. He ain’t touched a drop for years. It’s a great pity, it makes him so unsocietable.”

I was about to jump up into the omnibus after Mrs. Bennett, when I suddenly experienced a number of totally unexpected sensations. There was a movement in the crowd behind us; I was conscious of a sharp pain in the region of my tail, and of finding myself in the carriage without any effort of my own. I heard a dull thud, such as might be caused by the contact of a heavy human paw with a heavy human jaw, and turned round in time to see the human mongrel whom I had recently bitten lying on

the ground and Dr. Coghlan with his arm outstretched.

"That is a remarkable example of reflex action, Mrs. Bennett," said Dr. Coghlan, looking at his arm in an impersonal and critical manner.

"It seems to me an example of a very bad action," returned Mrs. Bennett severely, but with a twinkle in her eye.

"No, but I assure you, Mrs. Bennett, I never hit the man—you know I take a scientific interest in these matters. The man struck my left arm and my right arm struck him. Pure reflex action; just as when a strong light strikes your eyes and your expiratory muscles strike back; that is to say, you sneeze. Most interesting example; must send it to the *British Medical Journal*."

In the meanwhile, the sufferer of this reflex action had risen to his feet and was advancing in a threatening attitude towards Dr. Coghlan.

"Keep out of it, you fool!" muttered his companion, catching him by his coat collar. "Yer oughtn't to have kicked the dawg—yer could have pisened him later." Suddenly the expression of his face changed; he might have been seeing a ghost.

"Lawks a mercy, look at that, mate!" he said pointing to the Chihuahua dog, "look at that! 'Fust

prize, His Majesty, remarkable specimen'—why, blind me if it ain't 'Drunken Billy!' Fust prize! Oh, how Menzies will scream! Fust prize! Oh, lor! Oh,



His Majesty triumphant.

hold me tight! Oh, lor! Oh, lor!" And both of them burst into roars of laughter, rolling about and embracing each other in their almost apoplectic mirth.

“Drive on, Higgins,” cried Mrs. Bennett, “and get away from these dreadful men!”

“Oh, lor! Oh, lor! Oh, hold me tight!” echoed in our ears above the rattle of the carriage, as the horses, urged by the somewhat unsteady Higgins, cantered down the cobbled street.

“Remarkable example of reflex action,” sighed Dr. Coghlan, seriously, as he settled down in a corner for a nap. “I must send it to the *British Medical*.”

Silenced by the monotonous rumble of the omnibus and tired out with the day’s exertions, all the Humans closed their eyes and quickly nodded. The dull light of the smoky carriage-lamp but touched their faces dimly, and seemed to focus all its rays to form a halo round the Chihuahua dog.

“So you’re ‘Drunken Billy,’” I said to myself. “You are ‘Drunken Billy’—well—some day—we shall know what Drunken Billy means.”

CHAPTER V

A NIGHTMARE AND A RECONCILIATION

THE week following the great Barnham Show was about the most unwagful time I ever had in my life. Whenever the Humans addressed me, which was seldom (for Jock and I had come to be almost totally ignored) I did my best to express a reciprocal amiability, but my wretched tail always gave me away. It had not a wag left in it. I lost my appetite, my hair began to fall out, I suffered from the most hideous dreams, but my miserable condition escaped the eye of even the dear master whom I had adopted and trained for many years. Such is Human gratitude !

But he, with the rest of the Humans, was at the moment perfectly rabid ; rabid over " Drunken Billy," *alias* the Chihuahua dog. In honour of this wretched impostor (for that he *was* an impostor I became every day the more convinced) were given lunch parties,

dinner parties, and garden parties innumerable. Humans who lived at a distance, and whose desire of making Mrs. Bennett's acquaintance had been overcome by the contemplation of a tediously long drive, succumbed without demur to the fatal curiosity excited by reports of the microscopic size of her canine *protégé*. It was stated that he weighed only eight ounces, that he could stand on the palm of a Human's paw, that he understood seven languages and that he barked in a different manner in reply to each of them. The visitors to Mrs. Bennett's kennel had little opportunity of verifying or disproving any of these alleged physical qualities or intellectual accomplishments, for, as long as their hostess was present, the little beast was kept under the strictest surveillance and was not allowed to be touched or to be removed from the silk-lined basket-kennel in which it impudently yapped or incontinently snored. Perhaps in the recesses of Mrs. Bennett's mind there lurked a suspicion that, without these protective measures, the Chihuahua's claims to notoriety would not bear the searching examination to which they might have to submit should any connoisseur of Mexican dogs chance to make his appearance. If such a suspicion existed it was not only too vague for her to recognise, but was also one which, had she been

:



"I had not a wag left."

L. of C.

reproached with it, she would have indignantly repudiated.

Notwithstanding the fact that her books proclaimed her to the world and to her friends as a Human with the highest imaginative powers, and hence the more likely to be deceived, yet the sincerity of her belief in the Chihuahua dog was so obvious, and her enthusiasm so intense, that they made themselves irresistibly contagious.

True! there were a few who at first were not as thoroughly convinced as she was in regard to the animal's familiarity with seven languages, or were as capable of detecting the fine distinction in the barks with which he responded to them, but their scepticism finally yielded to the remarkable exhibition of intelligence elicited from the Chihuahua by Mrs. Bennett's nephew Archie.

This irresponsible and unconscionable Human pup would stand near the Chihuahua's basket and solemnly pronounce in the most dramatic and convincing manner the mysterious syllables "Hia-wat-ta-ta," which he assured his Aunt was the native Indian for "Beware! you are being attacked in the rear," "the only Indian sentence," he continued, "I picked up during my life out West. There are reasons for its being indelibly impressed on my

memory.” The effect, in favourable circumstances, of “Hia-wat-ta-ta” on the Chihuahua was certainly very remarkable. I should have been deceived myself had I not been present at an interview between Archie and his bosom friend, a still younger pup than he was.

“See here,” said Archie, holding something in mid-air, “d’you ‘savey’ what that is—it’s a lady’s bonnet-pin, eight inches long.”

“Well, what of it?” queried his young friend.

“A pin,” continued Archie oracularly, “is the most universally useful implement in the world; when held in the right place and handled in the proper manner, its business capacity is simply irresistible.”

“What’s your little game?” asked his friend.

“A very simple one, my dear fellow. I stand on one side of the Chihuahua’s basket—you stand on the other. I attract the little beast’s attention, which brings his head end, and the eyes of the spectators, round to me, and his tail end round to you. With your left hand you deftly raise the folds of silk which hang round the outside of the basket so that they conceal your right hand, in which is held this useful little implement of domestic life.”

“And then I stick it in?”

“Not until I give the signal,” replied Archie.

“Everything being ready for the experiment, I shall

say, 'Hia-wat-ta-ta,' which we'll say means 'Beware! you are being attacked in the rear.' Directly you hear 'Hia-wat-ta-ta,' in with your pin, far in, right through the basket into the Chihuahua. If that doesn't give a different tone to his voice and make him right-about-turn I don't know what will—Ha, ha, ha!" and the young conspirators roared aloud. "I bet the Chihuahua will respond with intelligence and spontaneity. Oh, it's a grand idea! My A'nt will be delighted."

His "A'nt" was delighted. Poor Mrs. Bennett! had she discovered that she and her guests were the victims of a practical joke executed by two pups hardly old enough to have the distemper, it would have broken her heart.

The first "experiment" (as Archie termed it) was a grand success. It was performed at a garden party which included all the prize Humans of the vicinity.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," began Archie, addressing the pack with unblushing effrontery, "with my A'nt's kind permission I am going to demonstrate to you the Chihuahua's knowledge and ready appreciation of a language he must have been familiar with in his infancy. I happen to know one sentence used by the Indian tribes in that part of the West in which the

Chihuahua was born. * I will not divulge to you at present the meaning of the sentence, but I have written it on this piece of paper which I place in Dr. Coghlan's hands, and I will leave it to you to decide whether the Chihuahua's action shows a quick appreciation—note my words, ladies and gentlemen—a *quick* appreciation of the same."

All through this harangue "Drunken Billy" was snoozing peacefully in his basket, blissfully unconscious of his impending fate, with his head towards the speaker and his tail in dangerous proximity to a hidden point.

"Now," said Archie, keeping his eye on his accomplice. "Now—Hia-wat-ta-ta."

Yes, the result was remarkable. The Chihuahua squealed even before he opened his eyes. It seemed as if he had a nightmare. Awakening suddenly to full consciousness, he glared at the assembled Humans. As if appreciating a danger he was unable to localise, he struggled to his feet.

"Hia-wat-ta-ta," repeated Archie demurely, with a look at his friend. The Chihuahua's little carcass bounded in the air, he gave vent to another shrill squeal, and turning round savagely, attacked and tore at the lining of his basket which had been nearest to his tail.

“Dr. Coghlan,” said Archie, “I will now ask you to read aloud the meaning of ‘Hia-wat-ta-ta.’”

“Certainly,” replied Dr. Coghlan, “where are my glasses? Ah! here we are—your handwriting is not good, Archie, but I think I can make it out—it seems to be ‘Beware! you are being attacked in the rear.’”

During the following days the experiment was repeated at intervals with the same success, and my tail seemed to recover a little of its tone when I reflected that the Chihuahua’s existence was not one of altogether unalloyed happiness. To be sure there was the risk that the constant anxiety of being exposed to an unexpected attack in the rear might finally tell upon his nerves, and help to preserve the stunted growth which was his chief claim upon the approbation of the Humans, but this danger was to some degree discounted by the fact that Archie, when the experiment was over and his Aunt’s back was turned, always compensated for the tortures he had inflicted by filling the Chihuahua up with unlimited supplies of cake and jam.

At the end of a week, Archie’s confederate took his departure, and although “Drunken Billy” had learnt to regard the sound of “Hia-wat-ta-ta” as of evil omen, yet its repetition caused him only a

passing uneasiness when no longer accompanied by the application of a pin.

"My dear A'nt," said Archie in explanation, "if your nervous system had been shattered by your being persistently told for a week that you were in danger of being attacked in the rear, and nothing came of it, you'd get a bit phlegmatic yourself; the dog is obviously beginning to see that I am a liar, and if I don't hitch off at once I shall lose all moral control over him."

Among the not least remarkable characteristics of the Chihuahua were the attacks of intense irritability to which he was subject. It was in the treatment of these attacks that Higgins and Archie had acquired such a reputation for exercising moral control over him. As a matter of fact, the "moral control" was a transparent, watery-looking fluid, kept in a quart bottle and labelled "Unsweetened Gin." It was administered on small pieces of sugar, and acted as a specific. However snappish the condition of the Chihuahua, five minutes of this treatment restored his equanimity, ten minutes made him amiably excited, fifteen minutes rendered him slobberingly incoherent, and in twenty minutes he became what Archie used to describe as "comfortably blind." It is curious how clear a track I have of these things now, for at the time I followed no scent of them.



A Thorough-bred Mongrel.

I never spoke to the Chihuahua, I never looked at the Chihuahua, in fact, every hour of the day Jock and I resolved in solemn consultation that we would not even think of the Chihuahua. We agreed that we both were thoroughly miserable, because we both were thoroughly ill. The Humans, however, refused to regard our cases seriously, and when they addressed us at all treated us with an irritatingly amiable levity. "Poor Jock! has he got a dry nose!" said Miss Seaton one day in passing. *Now*, thought we, *now* they'll send for the doctor. But they didn't. "Jock's nose is out of joint," said Dr. Coghlan, patting the organ vigorously, "Jock's nose is out of joint, that's what's the matter with Jock." And they passed on, emitting those ridiculous cackling sounds which Humans describe as laughter.

"I say, old gal," said Jock to me plaintively (Jock had got much too familiar with me lately), "I know my nose is dry—but is it—is it really out of joint?"

"Oh, don't be a fool, Jock—your nose hasn't got a joint." However, I had understood Dr. Coghlan's allusion, although I felt it useless to enlighten Jock's bucolic mind.

On that same day Miss Balhoon arrived at Mrs. Bennett's kennel on a visit.

She was a London actress of more or less repute ;

Mr. Singwell said "less," but in any case she seemed to set all the male Humans by the ears, because, like Miss Fretcher, she had too much bark about her.

It was my Pa who had introduced her to Mrs. Bennett. He had sat up ("played" as he calls it) in the same piece with her. This combination of talent resulted in a "run" of three weeks. My Pa, as usual, was cursed by the author and damned by the Press. I know these things because I used to take him to the theatre every night and help him to dress, or sometimes, when I preferred it, to wait in the "hall-keeper's" office just inside the stage door. It was on one of the latter occasions that the sketch appended was taken of me by a belated reporter on the *New Budget*¹ who came to see a dress rehearsal twenty-four hours after it was finished. He had to draw something, so he drew me. My Pa says it is very characteristic.

I remember Miss Balhoon's arrival because on that day at lunch were discussed many exciting topics of conversation, one of which was the indirect means of my becoming reconciled to my master. Miss Balhoon seemed to have the knack of opening up every subject on which the Humans felt keenly, and about which there was likely to be considerable

April 25, 1895.

difference of opinion. Personally I enjoy exciting topics of conversation. To me there is nothing so soothing, so soporific, as the high-pitched inflections of a heated discussion. Nothing is so luxurious as to



"My Pa says it is very characteristic."

cushion the chin on one's extended paws, to wander just so far into dreamland that the Humans' voices sound like the murmur of a distant sea, to be recalled to reality from time to time by some familiar word or

sudden exclamation, and lazily regarding the troubled speaker through half-raised lids to enjoy the contrast of one's own repose. On this occasion the first subject discussed was what Dr. Coghlan contemptuously described as "the so-called art of acting." This topic provoked so much difference of opinion and such a wealth of monotonous argument that, had it not been changed, I feel sure I should have dozed peacefully through lunch. The word that startled me and brought me back to consciousness was the word "Vivisection," a word which always frightened me, though I was but vaguely conscious of its meaning. But the day was sultry and I felt drowsy. I again laid my nose upon my paws, and closing my eyes, began to wonder what vivisection really was, and why it always made my master turn pale and brought that look into his eyes of which I was so afraid.

What followed is a hideous nightmare. Yet at the time, what was nightmare, and what was not, I did not know.

* * * *

It seemed to me that the discussion became more and more heated, and that my master lost his temper and asked Mrs. Bennett's permission to leave the table on the plea that he had an engagement in town. I seem to remember his taking me this same after-

noon into the ward of a large London hospital—I think it must have been the hospital at which he had studied, as he seemed to know every one so well. The ward was a beautiful, roomy kennel, very clean and comfortable. A gentle Human, a woman Human, gave me cake to eat and milk to drink. But it was not the cake and milk that made me feel happy. It was herself. She wore a soft blue frock and a spotless white apron, which no dog would be too proud to soil. She was not pretty, but she had the sweetest smile in the world, and the tenderest, most dog-like eyes I had ever seen; kindness shone from their depths and warmed one as the sun's rays through a window. I rarely approve of strangers, but I felt quite sad when the time came for saying goodbye to this one. I let her take me up in her arms and kiss me. She stood at the ward door, watching us as I trotted after my master down the broad oak staircase, and she smiled as I wagged back to her “Good hunting! Good hunting!” I felt that if there was a heaven, and I went there, I knew one person I should surely meet.

It must have been this thought that made me so absent-minded as to allow my master to get lost. Nothing annoys a dog so much as when his master goes astray. It seems so stupid, so inattentive. But

when he reappears, whistling loudly in his despair, one has not the heart to express one's disapprobation. I waited patiently for some time, thinking he might have the sense to return, and then began sniffing about for a trace of him. At last I thought I had found one, and determined to follow it, although it was faint and uncertain, and was crossed by the scent of other humans. It led me to another part of the hospital, up some stone steps, to a large entrance over which was written, "*Schola Medicinæ*. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

I went in and found a great, large kennel with swinging doors, on the glass of which was printed in golden letters "*The Library*." Here the scent became puzzling, but I finally decided that my master had walked about outside the library door and had then broken away up the stone steps to the right. I distinctly traced him past "*The Anatomical Theatre*" on the next landing, past "*The Museum*" on the next, and then I reached the highest storey of all. Everything was silent; the hot sun streamed through the large windows and spreading skylight. The air was heavy with repellent odours of unhealthy animals, with strange suggestions of the shambles, and with the sickly fumes of some poisonously sweet-

smelling drug. Over the door was written "The Physiological Laboratory."

"How the deuce did *you* get out?" suddenly said a voice, and I found myself kicked, none too gently, through the folding doors.

"Confound that porter!" continued the Human vainly trying to force his way into another kennel; "he first lets the animals out and then locks the stable door. Here, you'll have to wait in the Theatre for the present."

"The Theatre" was very different from the theatres to which my master had been accustomed to take me. There was no curtain and no scenery. The stage was merely a small platform on which was a simple wooden table, covered with apparatus I had never seen before. In front of the platform stretched rows of wooden benches, tier upon tier, until the hindmost were half-lost in the black shadows of the ceiling. I climbed up to the darkest corner I could find, wondering in what sort of a trap I had been caught and how long my stupid old master would take to track me. I must have fallen asleep—at least, when I next opened my eyes everything was changed. Outside it was dark. I had a strange sense that something dreadful was happening, or was about to happen. The brilliant rays of light which fell

from a powerful, but shaded lamp, on to the central table only served to emphasise the dark, sombre shadows haunting the remote recesses of the room. Silhouetted against the light were the heads of some fifty Humans sitting on the front benches. They were chiefly young men. Some whispering and laughing to each other, some taking notes, some lolling back in their seats overcome with boredom and drowsiness; some eager, pale, and absorbed, with their eyes riveted on the platform.

What was to be seen there?

A Human, standing alone behind the table; a fat, heavy Human, with a congested face, a black beard, and puffy hands. He was barking in a loud, bullying, resonant voice. What was it all about?—apparently about the dead body of a white tame rabbit, stretched at full length on its back, and screwed down in a kind of trough before him, with its body cut open and a long glass tube thrust into a blood-vessel in its neck.

“Poor sport! not half as good as a chase in the open,” thought I to myself, when suddenly my heart stood still.

Was the animal dead? The crimson spots on its white fur were still wet, the scent of warm blood floated through the air to my nostrils—my coat bristled with horror. Now that I strained my eyes I could

distinctly see the fluttering, gasping movements of its chest, the agonised quiver of its limbs, the nervous spasm that seized it each time the Human lecturing giant approached it with his puffy hands. I cocked my ear to catch what he was saying.

“This is a pretty experiment, gentlemen, and may help to impress on your minds a fact which really should need no demonstration.”

Thus delivering himself, he turned some tap fixed in the rabbit's neck. There was a rush of warm, living, crimson blood into the glass tube, a wave of convulsive terror swept through the animal's frame, and it seemed as if the wild contortions of its trunk must dismember it or break the rack to which its limbs were bound. The lecturer, through half-closed lids, watched the abortive struggle with an expression of long-suffering complacency. Of the students, some seemed amused; one stopped picking his teeth to laugh aloud; a few gave vent to suppressed hisses. The lecturer looked up.

“Really, gentlemen,” he plaintively drawled, “you disturb yourselves unnecessarily; the animal will be taken out presently and killed.”¹

¹ Founded on a scene witnessed in the Physiological Class of Edinburgh University, 1882. See report of Writer's speech made at St. James' Hall, May 10, 1898.

I watched this man with a fascinated horror ; the more so as from time to time I suspected him of peering up into the darkness in which I was trying to conceal myself. My suspicions were only too quickly confirmed.

“The next experiment I shall show you, gentlemen, is the effect upon the heart’s action of stimulation of the vagus nerve, and I see a young friend up there who has apparently escaped from our little dogs’ home, and who will doubtless prove an excellent subject.”

All the students turned their heads towards me. The professor’s assistant carried me down, trembling and unresisting, for I was paralysed with fear. He was not an unkind man, and he patted me encouragingly.

“I don’t think this is one of our dogs, sir.”

“So much the better,” replied the professor ; “it is time the custom of bringing dogs to the hospital was put a stop to. Fix the animal up and don’t waste any time. Is the battery ready ?”

“Shan’t I give her a few whiffs of chloroform ?”

“It will only waste time,” was the impatient reply, “and we should have to wait for our demonstration until the animal had recovered.”

The assistant turned rather pale ; he reminded me of my master ; he was plain, but he had kindly grey

eyes. I put my paws upon his shoulders and timidly licked his face. He put me down gently and turned his head away, at the same time drawing towards me a rack similar to the one in which the rabbit had been pinioned. I looked at the professor: he was yawning and leisurely trying the keen edge of a bright steel scalpel on the back of his hand. I looked round at the circle of stolid, indifferent faces staring at me through the gloom. Never as long as I live shall I forget that awful moment. It can have been only a moment, although it seemed an hour. Suddenly the thought flashed upon me that it was all a dream. Humans were not devils. I had always found them kind and loving. Humans *could* not torture defenceless animals to death. God Himself could not permit such things to be. It was a dream, it was a nightmare. But I could not awaken myself. The hideous nightmare went on. My hair bristled—my eyes saw blood. I felt the grip of the professor upon me. I turned and bit him madly. A blow with a closed fist—a sickening dizziness—and then—when I recovered, I was pinioned down as in a vice. The thin whipcord that fastened me cut into my flesh. My head was bent backwards over a block of wood, and my jaws were immovably fixed with steel screws and leather straps. On one side stood the grey-eyed

assistant, a small sponge in his hand ; on the other the professor. With his left hand he deftly parted the hair on my neck, in his right hand I saw the glint of steel. My eyes started from my head. My skin seemed covered with myriads of creeping things. I felt the slow, deliberate movement of the naked knife in my flesh as the searing of a red-hot iron. All my muscles were torn in one convulsive movement—I seemed to burst my bonds and with a scream to fall through seas of blood on to the floor.

* * * * *

“Hett, little girl, what is it? Hett! my little Hett!”

Surely it was my master's voice. I scarcely dared to open my eyes. Some one lifted me up. It *was* my master. He sat by the open garden window and laid me on his lap, gently wiping the foam from the corners of my mouth.

“Poor little girl! poor little girl! she's had some dreadful dream.”

Thank God! it had been a dream. I was too weak to do aught but lick his hand ; my breath came in tremulous sobs ; my heart felt as if it was breaking, but breaking with joy.

That day my master never left me, and at night

when we went to bed he took me in his arms and fondled me.

“Have I been neglectful of my little Hett—have I?”

I lay my head against his cheek and kissed him. I said to him, out of my eyes—

“You know you are my world—my all. Love me a little—only love me a little.”

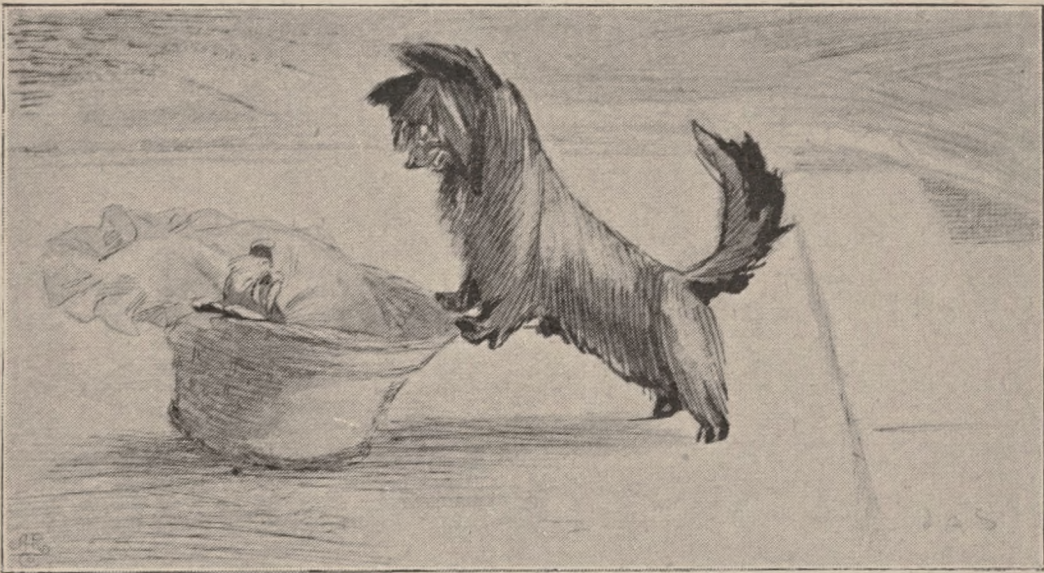
CHAPTER VI

THE FALL OF THE CHIHUAHUA

FROM this moment my spirits began to improve; my master was no longer estranged from me. Indeed, to atone perhaps for his past indifference and neglect, he was more than usually tender and loving. My life became a different thing, the sun seemed to shine more brightly, biscuits to taste more succulent, and fleas to become more considerate. I do not say my happiness was absolutely complete. I was conscious of a flaw in it—the thought of the Chihuahua dog. But why should I worry about the Chihuahua dog? I loved my master, and my master loved me. The Chihuahua be muzzled! I would go a-hunting.

But the more I chased the rabbits, the more the thought of that wretched “Drunken Billy” chased me. I remembered that since the night of the Show, when we all drove home in the omnibus together, I had hardly set eyes on the little beast. I had always

studiously looked the other way. I still retained a vivid recollection of his appearance when I first saw him, and, feeling happy again, was filled with a burning curiosity to see what he was like now. The occasion was propitious, the whole pack of Humans had gone out on a cycling hunt, the Chihuahua would be left



“‘Billy,’ said I, in a short yap, looking over the edge of the basket.”

basking in the sun on the terrace in front of the house. It didn’t take me long to get there.

“Billy!” said I, in a short yap, looking over the edge of the basket. Billy rolled over in his half-sleep and curled himself into a more comfortable position. “Billy!” I barked again, determined to force an interview. Billy opened one eye, and, seeing that it was not a Human who had disturbed him, began

leisurely to stagger on to his legs. Then he proceeded to shake himself, and, with considerable effort opening the other eye, surveyed me critically.

"Oh, it's you, stumpy legs," he said, after a pause. "So yer've condescended to speak to me at last. Yer might 'ave 'ad your 'air cut fust."

Impudent little cur! With one nip I could have sent him to the eternal Home for Lost Dogs, but I knew the devil would eventually look after his own, and I had different sport in view.

"Feel pretty well, Billy?" I said, smiling amiably.

"Well! Feel well! D'yer think *you'd* feel well smothered up in these bloomin' silks and satins all reeking with lavender? Feel well! with not a dawg to talk to, nor a Human who ain't afraid of 'aving her dress spoilt. I'd like to be back at the old shop." I pricked up my ears at this. "One always got a whiff of good old shag and a drop of gin on sugar whenever one arst for it—and such liberty, such a floor to run about on, all covered with sawdust. Law! what a beautiful aroma it had towards the end of the week! There wasn't a disagreeable day but Saturdays, when they cleaned up—and they was never offensive over it. There was always a corner or so left undisturbed. My corner they never touched. It was real mellow. I don't believe there was another

climate like it in England. Why, even the boss Human, the sanitary inspector, noticed it, but Menzies said 'e'd rather be fined £10 than 'ave that corner touched. Oh, they was real nice people, they was. None of the namby-pamby, overwashed, snivelling, odourless weaklings yer've got round 'ere."

This was really too much for me. Personal abuse I could stand, but I wasn't going to allow my friends to be insulted.

"Look here, Billy," I growled, "do you realise what *you* are? You're a dirty little misshapen, drunken, hybrid freak; you're a disgrace to caninity; in fact, you're not a dog at all. Your father must have been a monkey and your mother a mongoose. You're a——"

Billy interrupted me with an hysterical scream of inarticulate curses, his little carcass twisted about in contortions of impotent anger whilst he made frantic endeavours to scale the walls of his basket-kennel. The yielding eider-down, however, gave him no firm footing, and he only floundered about like a sheep in a bog.

"Billy," I said, when he was thoroughly exhausted, for my blood was up and I didn't mean to spare him, "if you were not such a miserable little insect I would shake the life out of you." I put my paws on the

edge of the kennel and showed my teeth. "But, as it is, I can only say——" But the basket was lighter than I had imagined, and I had hardly begun my growl when the weight of my body tilted it suddenly up, and Drunken Billy bounded up in the air like a shot rabbit, and, rolling over and over on the pavement, finally arrived at a position of rest. He found



"Drunken Billy bounded up in the air like a shot rabbit."

his legs at once, and, standing up, gazed at me for a moment in a half-dazed condition. It is a moment photographed on my memory. The outline of his fat little body stood out against the sun-beaten pavement. It was like a picture revealed by a flash of lightning, an image lasting on the senses longer than the time in which it was actually exposed. The Chihuahua *had grown!*—grown so decidedly that I marvelled

that the Humans had not noticed it, grown so unmistakably that I foresaw the history of his career, which it is my painful task to describe, and grown in such unfavourable proportions that, hating him as I did, I pitied him in anticipation of his inevitable downfall from the pinnacle of human adulation to the abyss of human contempt. But the occasion did not prove a good one for moral reflection, for at that moment the sound of bicycle bells and of laughter and talking warned me that the pack of Humans had returned. The Chihuahua was dethroned, his palace lay dismantled; I had committed high treason, and I found myself scampering as if for my life to the woods. I say I found myself scampering, for I do not admit for a moment that I—that is, the thinking part of me—would be guilty of such a cowardly and unsportsmanlike proceeding as running away. But when I found myself away, as I did in a couple of minutes, in the deepest recesses of the wood, the thinking part of me suggested that on this occasion it might be advisable, so as to guard against all possible contingencies, to endeavour to prove what I believe the Humans call an *alibi*. The dog heard hunting in the woods one minute was hardly likely to be the dog who had committed a crime on the terrace the minute before. As I have mentioned above, I have a remarkably

shrill and penetrating bark, and, although I was now hunting rabbits in a very half-hearted manner, I turned my bark on to its fullest value, so as to indicate to the Humans that I was thoroughly occupied in the excitement of the chase. I further made myself as dirty as I possibly could, which is saying a good deal.

Notwithstanding these little ruses, I returned to the house an hour or two later with a very trembling heart. They couldn't see my heart, but as usual my tail was my great trouble. I was jaunty enough but for that. They were on the look-out for me as I expected. My master and Dr. Coghlan, ready dressed for dinner, were chatting on the doorstep.

"Come here, Hett!" said the former severely, "What have you been doing?" I could tell at once that he hadn't seen me, that he didn't really know anything. This gave me courage, and I frisked around so as to flatter them with the idea that their society was the only joy of my existence (Humans are so easily flattered).

"I don't think Hett had anything to do with it," said my master, after a pause.

"No, I'm sure she hadn't," replied Dr. Coghlan. He always had that charming amiability of manner only to be acquired by a perfect disregard of the truth.

"No, I am sure she hadn't," repeated my master, who had a much more simple character.

"No, I am sure I hadn't," I wagged back—and so the matter ended.

For the rest of the evening I was in the wildest spirits in anticipation of the *exposé* which now appeared inevitable. The Humans seemed in a very different frame of mind. The ladies were tired after their cycling and resolved upon retiring to their respective kennels directly after dinner. A tender pressure on Miss Seaton's toe from Dr. Coghlan, which was the only sub-tabular reciprocity I observed during the evening, failed to alter that young lady's decision. The general conversation flagged, especially amongst the men, who appeared almost nervous and reserved. It was evident that nothing had been noticed about the Chihuahua. I gathered that the gentlemen had been first to arrive on the scene of disaster, that they had found the Chihuahua apparently in a fit, that Dr. Coghlan had promptly carried him off to the stables, and that the other gentlemen had engaged Mrs. Bennett in conversation and persuaded her not to see "Drunken Billy" until he had been treated by Higgens.

"The Chihuahua was perfectly right again," the gentlemen assured Mrs. Bennett, but her proposal

that he should be brought to the dinner-table for her inspection met with their unanimous disapproval. In fact, I had never heard them so unanimous over anything before.

"Perfect rest is essential," said my master, speaking in his medical capacity.

"He is as unapproachable as Miss Fretcher is after reading a critique of her new book," remarked Singwell.

"The word 'Hia-wat-ta-ta' would kill him," chimed in Archie.

I had still hopes, however, that Mrs. Bennett would have her own way, until Dr. Coghlan announced that he had recently administered a tablespoonful of castor oil, and that the occasion was not favourable to social intercourse on the part of the Chihuahua. This remark of Dr. Coghlan's is implanted on my memory with exactness, as I was the recipient of the playful kick accompanying it, a kick apparently designed for Singwell and the meaning of which I was totally at a loss to understand. After dinner the ladies retired to bed, and the gentlemen to the smoking-room. Here I met with another disappointment. My master, with a well-intentioned but perfectly unnecessary anxiety concerning my health, insisted on my retiring to bed. To oblige him I went; and the

click of the key being turned in the door after my departure filled me with a vague sense of mystery and distrust. Of the subsequent events of the evening I had, for weeks after, no scent at all, but thanks to my late communications with Drunken Billy and to what I have since overheard from the Humans relating the story, the course of events is now perfectly clear.

"Now, gentlemen," said my master, after locking the door, "now that we are at last free from the all-too-attractive and irresponsible trammels of female society, Human and Canine, let us get to business. Dr. Coghlan, I believe, has some important revelations to make which may seriously affect the happiness, if not the health, of our esteemed friend and hostess, Mrs. Bennett."

"Well, gentlemen," replied Dr. Coghlan, helping himself to whiskey and passing it on, "we all of us have had our suspicions about the Chihuahua, but to-day—thanks! not too much soda—to-day you all saw for yourselves. The Chihuahua has undoubtedly *grown*, and if he has grown, then he is not what he was represented to be—a full-grown adult—he is an impostor—in a word, he is not a Chihuahua dog at all, and Mrs. Bennett is the victim of an impudent fraud."

"Who's the chap who sent the dog to Mrs. Bennett?" asked Singwell.

"John Anthony."

"Well, what's he like? Is he all right?"

"Oh, John Anthony is right enough," said Archie. "He's a bit rough; he lives out West, but he's not the man to play a trick on a woman."

At that moment there was a knock on the door.

"There's Higgens with the culprit; open the door, Archie."

Since his little *fracas* with me the Chihuahua had had, from his point of view, a very good time of it. Higgens had promptly administered a large dose of his favourite remedy, and repeated it in teaspoonful doses every ten minutes until the patient had fallen into a drunken sleep. From this "Billy" now awakened to find himself with a consuming thirst and situated, somewhat to his surprise, in the middle of the large table of a kennel that was strange to him. Through the rolling clouds of tobacco smoke, emphasised in his immediate vicinity by the brilliant rays of the reading-lamp under which he was placed, Billy could dimly discern the spotless shirt fronts and pale faces of the half-dozen Humans seated around.

"Put him on the table," said Dr. Coghlan.

Billy found himself nipped up by the scruff of his neck, whilst his basket was sent flying to the other end of the room. Once on his legs he exhibited no modesty or indecision in the expression of his desires, but made straight for the nearest tumbler.

"Give him a plain soda," suggested Mr. Singwell. But Billy, barely sniffing at the plain soda, turned away in disgust.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," said Higgins, producing a small bottle, "but if you would allow me to dilute it with a drop or two of 'unsweetened' just to take the chill off, sir," he added appealingly to Dr. Coghlan ; "'e never takes water neat, sir."

"Very well, Higgins, it will at least prove to these gentlemen the truth of the extraordinary story you have told me."

Diluted with a drop or two of "unsweetened" the Chihuahua lapped the water eagerly, unabashed by the gaze of his silent but critical audience, and then, apparently invigorated, proceeded to scratch himself violently.

"Fleas?" said Mr. Singwell, interrogatively.

"Yes, sir, fleas," replied Higgins, gravely. "I think he enjoys the 'untin' of them."

"Fleas, I believe," remarked Dr. Coghlan, "never

leave a dog for a man, so we may consider ourselves safe."

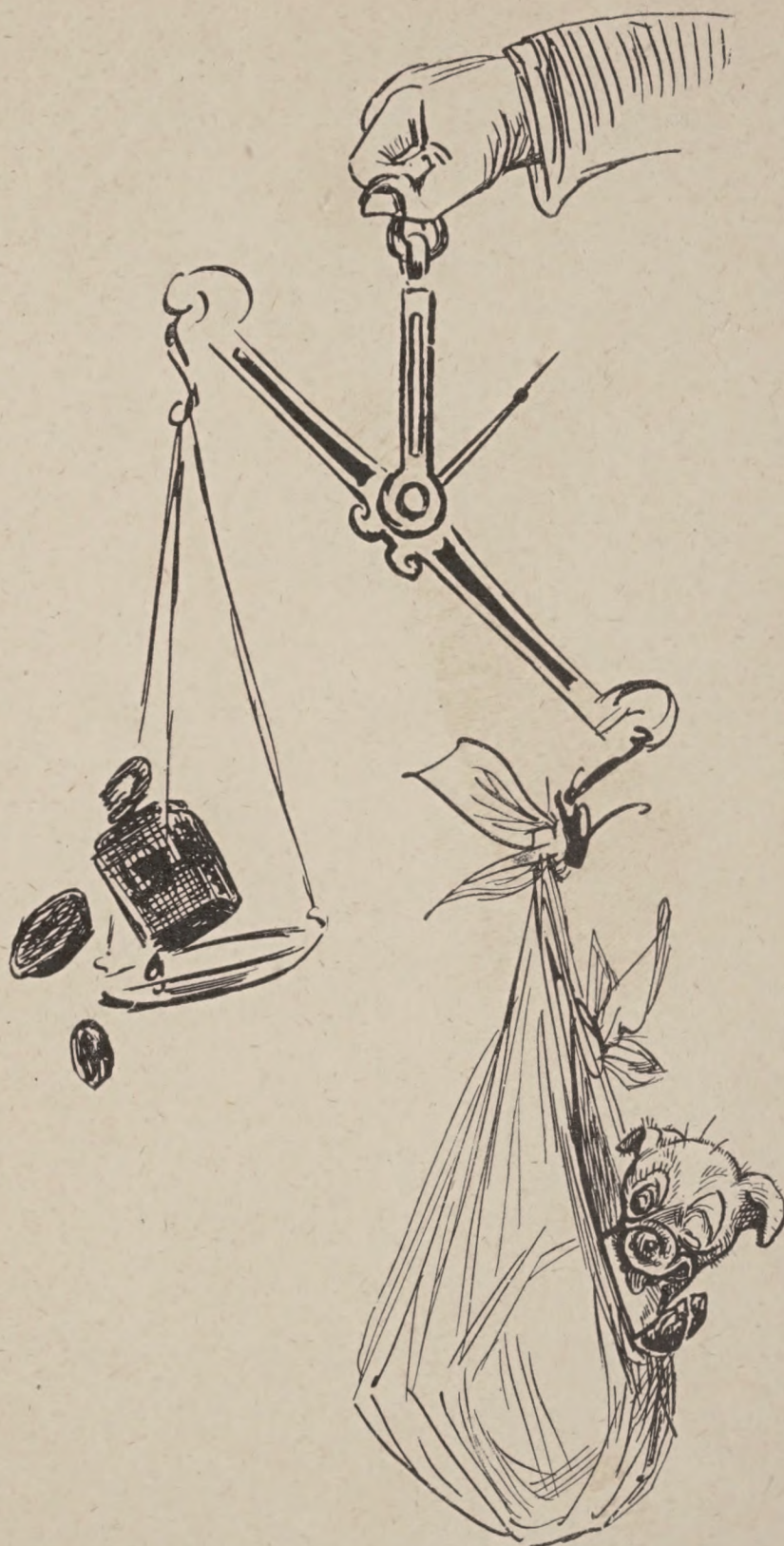
"That's natural enough," replied Singwell. "On a dog, a flea feels he has a house of his own—on a man, he has only apartments—at any moment he may have notice to quit."

"Now, Higgins," said Dr. Coghlan, "tell these gentlemen what you know about the Chihuahua dog."

"Well, sir, it ain't much ; when the dawg fust came to me, sir, I discovered by a mere accident (a little drop of gin, sir, I kept 'andy for cleaning the 'arness) that the dawg was fond of stimulant. I gave it to him as a joke, sir, at fust, but when I saw the dawg getting bigger, and I knew Mrs. Bennett expected him to keep small, I gave it to him on purpose, for nothing stops growth like gin. But in spite of the gin he's getting bigger, and the bigger he gets the more gin 'e wants."

"Well, gentlemen," said Dr. Coghlan, "the first question we have to decide in a scientific and practical manner is : Has the Chihuahua grown or not?"

"Are there balance here, to weigh the flesh?" quoted my master in a tragic tone. Higgins produced a small butcher's scale, on the hook of which Billy, secured in a handkerchief tied at its four corners, was speedily suspended. He seemed to



“He seemed to regard the proceedings as specially
designed for his delectation.”

regard the proceedings as especially designed for his delectation, and gazed at the surrounding Humans with a mixture of saucy curiosity and patronising approbation.

“Now, Higgins, hold the scale quite steady; Archie, bring the lamp nearer. Gentlemen! the Chihuahua registers three pounds, or nearly twice the weight he did on his arrival.”

A prolonged whistle from the men followed this announcement.

“Poor Mrs. Bennett!” sighed Dr. Coghlan, with a sepulchral seriousness, “poor woman, *I am so sorry!*”

Archie broke into a roar of laughter.

“I am surprised at your lack of taste,” resumed Dr. Coghlan sharply; “this will prove no laughing matter to your Aunt. An account of the dog has already appeared in the local papers, and when it is known that he is a mongrel fraud, Mrs. Bennett will be the laughing-stock of the county.”

“Serve her right,” testily replied Archie, “serve her right for fooling over the darned thing so much. If I had *my* way I’d drown the little beast, and send her the corpse by parcel post.”

“Yes, I dare say you would—in California; but over here we do things differently.”

The truth was that Dr. Coghlan’s interest in the

Chihuahua was not wholly impersonal. Although at the Dog Show he had believed "Billy" to be genuine enough, yet his conscience had more than once pricked him at having allowed himself to be party to, if not the instigator of, Higgins' successful attempt at influencing and misleading the judge, and now that he found that he had been the aider and abettor in a positive fraud, and the prime cause of his hostess's present predicament, he felt distinctly uncomfortable.

"It would be a highly improper proceeding," continued the doctor, "to make away with the animal without Mrs. Bennett's consent. But she must be told the truth at once. The 'Chihuahua at homes' next week must be postponed, and the whole affair hushed up as much as possible."

"You propose to tell Mrs. Bennett that the dog is a fraud, and that she will be the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood?" said Singwell.

"Well, you see, I am so awfully sorry for her, you know, that I don't propose to tell her *myself*. I thought *you* would do it, my dear Singwell."

"My very dear Coghlan, I really couldn't, I am too awfully sorry for her myself; but our friend here," indicating my master, "he's the person—he knows her better than we do."

"Well," replied my master, "of course, I should have great pleasure in breaking any sad news to Mrs. Bennett. No! no! I don't mean that—but you understand. However, I am of opinion that Archie is the person to tell her—he's a relation."

"I don't see what being a relation has to do with it," grumbled Archie.

"There, my dear boy," replied Singwell, "you are lacking in perception. What is the difference between friends and relations? Friends are the people one consorts with who are not relations, and relations are the people one consorts with who are not friends. If Mrs. Bennett hears that *you* have something to tell her, she will instinctively know that it is unpleasant. The fact of your speaking would be a preparation in itself."

"You won't catch me telling her, anyhow, relation or no relation. Besides, if the dog isn't a real Chihuahua, why did he jump at the word 'Hia-wat-ta-ta'?"

"Well, the whole affair is full of mystery," said Singwell, "whichever way you look at it, but as no one can be found to bell the cat, let us play a waiting game. Of course the 'At homes' must be postponed, we must say the dog is ill. Pass the little beggar over here; thank you! I thought so! the

dog is full of fat. Now can't you two medical men suggest a way of reducing its weight?"

"Allow me to examine the patient," replied Dr. Coghlan, seizing hold of the Chihuahua, who was delighted to find himself the object of so much attention. "Yes, there is a considerable quantity of adipose tissue here, and we might try and reduce it. Does the dog take well, Higgens?"

"Beg pardon, sir."

"Does he eat well, Higgens?"

"Eat, sir! Anything, sir, from a red herring to a piece of firewood."

"You can give him both, Higgens, especially the firewood—but nothing else—nothing else for a week. A teaspoonful of castor oil every night. Reduce the gin as much as possible, and never give it on sugar. Remember, sugar is absolutely forbidden. I'll send you round some medicine."

"We'll put him on iodide of potassium," added Dr. Coghlan, aside to my master. "It's a great alterative, and any alteration will be an improvement; but I must warn you, gentlemen," he continued aloud, "that the dog is a growing dog, and no treatment will make him perceptibly smaller."

"Well, give him a week," said Singwell, "and in the meantime persuade Mrs. Bennett to take a

tonic or something to strengthen her nerves. My foot has gone to sleep, but I think it is the most sensible thing about me, so I'm going to follow its example. Gentlemen, good-night!"

Such, I imagine, is a general outline of the consultation about the Chihuahua, held on this memorable occasion. Had I known of it at the time, I should have been spared a great deal of anxiety. As it was, the whole course of contemporaneous events was a mystery to me. Mrs. Bennett seemed as much in the dark as I was myself. The Chihuahua was said to be ill, there was no cause for alarm, at the same time he must be kept perfectly quiet at least for a week. All this seemed possible enough and yet various little incidents excited my suspicions. For instance, all allusions to Billy were coldly received and quickly dismissed. The gentlemen displayed an unusual interest in each other's society, but were silent and abstracted when with the ladies. Lastly, the Chihuahua was kept under lock and key and I could devise no trick of getting even a glimpse of him.

After the first twenty-four hours, Mrs. Bennett seemed to accept the situation and made no further reference to her pet. This encouraged me considerably, as I had learnt from experience that Mrs.

Bennett's silence bespoke danger. Such proved to be the case. At the end of dessert on the seventh day of the Chihuahua's retirement, Dr. Coghlan was requested, with his hostess's sweetest smile, to ring the bell.

"Barrett," she said, as the butler entered the room, "go to the stables," Mrs. Bennett still spoke with a smile, but there was a cold ring in her voice that meant finality, "and tell Higgins to give you at once the Chihuahua dog, whether it is well, ill, or dead ; bring it to me here."

The silence that followed was so complete that I could hear the thumping of my own heart. Not a Human stirred. The spell would have soon become intolerable, had not Jock opportunely broken it by awakening with a noisy yawn. The men shifted uneasily in their seats.

"Mrs Bennett," at last said Dr. Coghlan, apparently unconscious of the fact that he was holding a newly lighted cigar in his hand, "ah ! if you will kindly excuse me—I should like to fetch my cigarettes."

"Coghlan !" shouted Singwell, "do you mind bringing me—no, no ! if you'll excuse me, Mrs. Bennett, I'll do it myself."

"Pardon me, Mrs. Bennett," said my master, nearly



The fall of the Chihuahua.

tumbling over me in his anxiety to escape, "but I must really go and see where Hett is."

Archie left the room without comment. The other gentlemen, rising, and first nervously fingering the backs of their chairs, edged towards the door. By the time the butler returned with the Chihuahua's basket the ladies and myself were the sole possessors of the field. To my surprise, Billy scrambled readily out of his basket on to the table. He was bigger, uglier, and bonier than when I saw him last. He had lost his smooth rotundity of stomach and his skin hung about him in senile, wrinkling folds. Mrs. Bennett gazed at him for a moment. She looked paler than usual and the smile on her face was as the set smile of a mask.

"Barrett," she said, after a pause, "take this dog to the stables, and tell Higgins to keep it there for the future," and rising slowly, she left the room.

I gave one sharp bark of delight. The Chihuahua had fallen from his high estate. The Chihuahua's fate was sealed.

CHAPTER VII

BILLY AND I MAKE FRIENDS

THE realisation of the great moments of life never fulfil the anticipation of them.

I have hunted the same rat for days and finally caught and killed him. A nip, a couple of shakes, and it is all over. There is nothing to do with a dead rat but drop it. That is what the Humans did with the subject of the Chihuahua—they simply dropped it. The great *denôuement* had happened, but nothing had come of it. I don't think I had expected to be fed for a month on game as a reward for hastening the Chihuahua's exposure, or to be allowed, with Jock, to worry the animal on the open lawn; but I *had* looked forward, perhaps, to hearing the Humans inveigh against the enormity of the deception practised upon them and to receiving an increased approbation on their part of my own thoroughbred qualities. I was doomed to disappointment. There

was nothing in the conversation to suggest to one that the Chihuahua had ever existed, or that there were such animals as dogs in the world at all.

Things went on very much as usual, except that the garden-parties were postponed on the plea of Mrs. Bennett's ill-health, and the house, speaking figuratively, had all the blinds pulled down. Archie seemed to be the only Human not affected by the general depression, or indisposed to regard recent events seriously.

"I don't know whether you fellows are rehearsing for mutes," he said one day at lunch after a long pause in a flagging conversation, "but I foresee that if you go in for this sepulchral sort of business much longer, I shall follow the example of the Chihua——" (Here Archie was arrested by a small volley of kicks under the table.) "I mean of a young friend we know, and take to drink."

I recalled this remark later in the afternoon during my usual walk with Mrs. Bennett through the rose garden, when, having been occupied with a short rat hunt, I suddenly missed her and only traced her to the stable in time to hear the end of a conversation with Higgens.

"Well, Higgens, what you have told me amazes me very much. I want you to treat the Chi—the dog

kindly ; but I warn you that if I hear of him having another drop of alcohol in any form you will be dismissed at once—I shall not blame the misguided animal, but you.”

Before Drunken Billy's degradation I had pictured to myself the delight of sniffing disparagingly around him, of kicking up the ground in his face, and of expressing my contempt in a hundred equally delectable ways. Now that the opportunity had arrived, some restraining force seemed to hold me back, and for days I never set eyes on the animal. Jock's enjoyment of the situation was not alloyed by any such compunctions. He used to sit round the stables by the hour, rolling out his great tongue and grinning at the Chihuahua from ear to ear in his undisguised delight of his enemy's discomfiture. It was from Jock that I obtained all the current news. The night, he said, on which Billy had been sent back to the stables would have made a cat laugh. On Higgins hearing from the butler of Mrs. Bennett's final dismissal of the animal, he almost burst into tears.

“I knowed it was no good, old fellow,” he said plaintively to the Chihuahua ; “if a dawg's got to grow, he's got to grow. I've starved yer for a week for nothing, but to-night we'll both have a good blow out to make up for it.”

And Higgins got the gin-bottle down, and the new pound of lump sugar that had lain unopened for a week. Twenty-four hours of this treatment made the Chihuahua begin to fill out again. On the second day Higgins weighed him. "Well, I'm blowed!" he said, after the ceremony. On the third day he weighed him again. "Well, I'm jiggered!" he remarked, "'e's positively *shooting* up, that's wot 'e is!" On the fourth day the revelations of the scale made Higgins reproach himself with such conviction as to the certainty of his own future damnation, that he finally abandoned this method of observation.

When Mrs. Bennett left the harness-room, after giving her instructions as to the Chihuahua's total abstinence in the future, Higgins lighted his pipe and gazed at the animal gravely.

"You heard my instructions, young man; I'm mighty sorry for yer, but I ain't a-going to lose a good place, not even for you. I fear there's trouble ahead for both of us; and there's 'ell, simply 'ell, for you."

Much to Jock's satisfaction, Higgins' anticipations were speedily fulfilled. Billy appeared to be possessed of the devil. He would not lie in the same place for five minutes together, and when he tried to walk

about he shook like a horse with the staggers. He wouldn't wag his tail, he couldn't cock his ear, he couldn't touch his food; he couldn't sleep a wink in the daytime, and he howled all through the night. The strangest thing to me was that Jock's recitals of Billy's woes, instead of filling me, as they should have done, with boundless delight, inspired in me almost a feeling of impatience.

"Yes, I've heard all that before," I snapped at him on one occasion.

"Oh, have you?" he growled. "Well, you won't hear it again, anyhow; and for the future you can make your own inquiries about the Chihuahua."

This I had occasion to do sooner than either of us anticipated, for at that moment a howl of pain that made my heart stop beating was heard in the direction of the stables.

I started to my feet trembling, with ears erect listening intently through the silent air. There was the sound of a scurry of feet, the swish of a stinging whip, and the hideous scream was repeated once again.

"What's that?" I panted, standing as still and as cold as a dog carved in stone, the hair bristling on my back.

"That's Higgins giving Billy his dessert," sneered Jock, "to make up for his taking no dinner."



“‘I did it! I did it!’ I snarled fiercely.”

Yes, I had guessed it even as I spoke, but it was Jock's cynicism that broke the spell that paralysed me. Lash upon lash, howl upon howl. My heart beat to bursting, and the warm blood seemed to break through its floodgates and set my body in a glow. I rushed off to the stables.

"Go it, softie!" shouted Jock after me; "go and get thrashed too."

I hardly turned to give him a mocking laugh. If there had been a dozen Humans and a dozen whips, I would have faced them all. Every fibre of me was on fire and cried out for blood, blood, blood!

I reached the stable-yard just in time to see Higgens kick the Chihuahua into a corner, where he lay silent and apparently stunned.

In one moment my teeth met in the fleshy part of Higgens' leg, and in another I had sprung a couple of yards away from him, and was standing in front of his victim. Not a second too soon, for, as I had anticipated, Higgens, with a savage oath, brought the butt end of his whip on the pavement behind him.

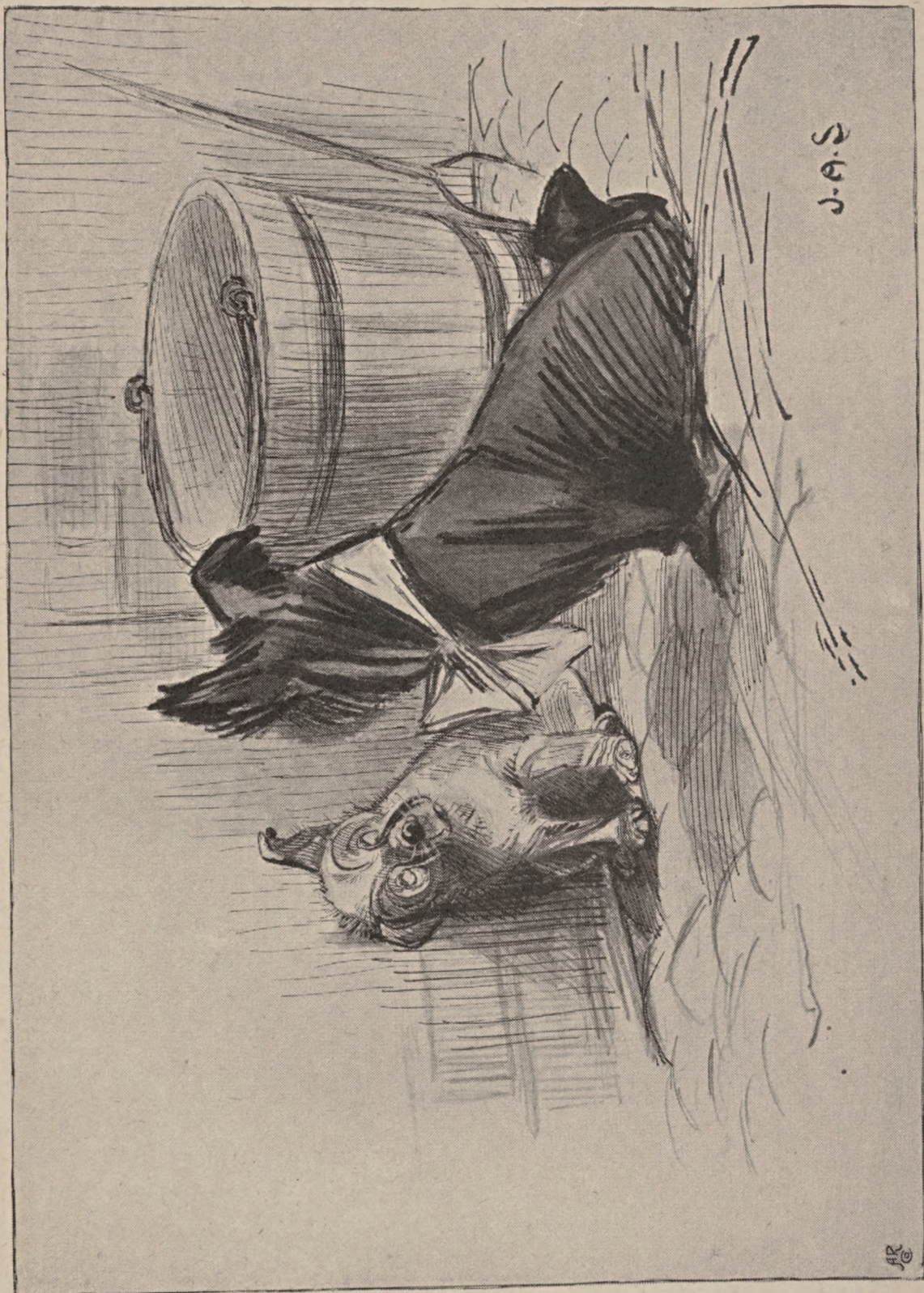
"I did it! I did it!" I snarled fiercely, facing him and showing all my teeth; "and if you budge one inch towards me I'll make for your scurvy throat!"

I stood ready to spring, the hair bristling on my back. I knew that the bite of a dog was Higgens'

pet terror, and, being acquainted with my perfect amiability, he might easily imagine that my present outburst indicated a rabid condition. Whatever his impressions, his face became an ashen grey, his lips twitched; the whip, which he had a second time raised to strike, fell slowly to his side, and, watching me like a scared rabbit, he backed slowly and silently into the harness-room and closed the door.

I turned my attention to the Chihuahua.

A more pitiable object cannot be imagined. He lay huddled up in the corner feebly licking the weals which had been raised by Higgins' whip. I could not help feeling a kind of motherly pity for him. Poor little beggar! After all, it was not his fault that he was a mongrel. But how to make friends? True, he was only a puppy; but he was a bad-tempered puppy, he was a puppy recovering from the after-effects of chronic alcoholism and of a very acute castigation. Considerable tact must evidently be exercised. I said nothing. I simply lay down at full length beside him, my head resting on my outstretched paws, and gazed into his eyes. Whenever he became conscious of my presence I beat the ground with my tail in modest, but approving, gratitude. At last my patience was rewarded. He looked at me, and began to make little nervous,



"I wish I was dead."

fluttering wags. I wagged back, sedately, quietly, and encouragingly.

"Hot weather!" I ventured at last to suggest, lolling out my tongue.

"My back's 'ot," said the Chihuahua, with significance, and ruefully licking one of his weals. He still spoke with a cockney accent, but the aggressive impudence of his manner had changed to an apologetic timidity.

"What did he whack you for?" I asked.

"He's always whacking me," whimpered the Chihuahua; "he's whacked me every day this week. My life's a 'ell. I wish I was dead! I can't get a drop to drink. If he puts a sup of ale on the table he watches me through the key-hole to see if I touches it. It ain't playing fair. To-day he left a quart bottle of gin uncorked. I was crazy to get my nose into it, and it fell over and broke. If I had had time to get a few laps I wouldn't have minded the thrashing. I wish I was dead!"

I gazed at this pathetic little freak in wondering amazement. He was the first drunken canine I had ever met.

"What do you want the beastly stuff for?" I said at last.

"Wot do I *want* it for?" yapped the Chihuahua,

lapsing for a moment into his old shrill voice ; “ what do I *want* it for?—What does a fish want water for? Why, to live in it—I b’lieve I wouldn’t mind being drowneded if I was drowneded in gin. You needn’t stop wagging. You wasn’t brought up on gin as I was. Whose fault is it that I am a drunkard? Why, the fault of the Humans. Whose fault is it that Human pups grow up drunkards? Why, the fault of their dams. Mother Menzies kept all her pups quiet with gin. Lots on ’em did in the Dials. There ought to be a law against it.”

This reference to the “ Dials ” brought back to my mind a subject more serious even than the Chihuahua’s inebriety.

“ Billy,” I said seriously—“ I believe your real name *is* Billy? ”

“ That’s me,” replied Billy, quite humbly ; “ Drunken Billy.”

“ Well, Billy, I’m sorry for you, and I’d like to be your friend ; and I *will* be, if you’ll answer one question. On your word of honour as a sportsdog and a gentledog : Do you, or do you not, come from *Chihuahua*? ”

Billy groaned aloud.

“ Puppy blind me if I know what yer mean by ‘ Shiwawa ’! I *may* have come from there. I *may*

have travelled hundreds of miles before I opened my eyes. But I remember nothing about it. All I can remember is Menzies, and the Dials, and the lovely gin on sugar," and Billy groaned again. He was evidently speaking the truth, and could throw no light on his parentage or origin. When would the mystery of John Anthony's letter to Mrs. Bennett be solved?

CHAPTER VIII

THE MYSTERY SOLVED

FROM that hour Billy and I were sworn friends. His happiness became the one object of my life. For its accomplishment I felt that two things were necessary. He must break himself of the liquor habit ; he must be reconciled to the Humans. Both achievements were full of difficulty, but I persevered. I sought Jock's assistance.

"If we dogs are to convince these Humans," thought I to myself, "we must all work together."

Jock would have none of it. "Consort with that mongrel?" he said. "Not I!" But Jock had a sneaking un-Platonic affection for me, although he was ten times too old—I mean too big—to make any serious proposals. At length I won him over. Hour after hour he and I used to roll about in the stable-yard trying to cheer Billy out of his fits of depression. Higgins was bewildered.

"Two weeks ago," he used to say to the stable hands, "them dogs would have killed the Chihuahua—and now look at 'em; why, they might have been cradled together!"



"Jock would have none of it."

The spectacle, coupled with the memory of the punishment I had inflicted, had an effect upon Higgins' mind, and when Billy was caught dram-stealing his punishment was quite of a perfunctory nature.

On several occasions Jock and I helped him to a little alcoholic relief in the front of the house. On our side the spirit of adventure was the temptation—on his side the spirit of gin. When the male Humans had retired after their wine we gave the signal to Billy to come in and have a general lap-up. But one night Barrett, the butler, appeared earlier than usual. There was a rush, a skurry, a smash of broken glass, and although, thanks to Barrett's discretion, the culprit was never discovered, we realised it was time that such tactics were discontinued.

Besides, my purpose was not to provide Billy with stimulants, but to cure him of alcoholism. I felt the great thing was to distract his mind at the time at which he had the greatest craving.

One night he was very bad indeed. He would have given his soul for a good lap of gin.

"Billy," I said, "did you ever hunt a rat? It's great sport."

"Don't want to hunt rats," replied Billy, irritably. "I want a drink."

"He's afraid," growled Jock, acting on the instructions I had previously given him.

The result was just what I had anticipated. Billy's back bristled with indignation.

'*Afraid!*' he snapped. "*Afraid!* I may be

ugly, I may be drunken, I may be badly bred, but I ain't a coward. Come on !”

So off we all started to the old Winthorpe barn, where there was always good hunting to be had. Billy quickly proved he was no coward, but also that he had not the slightest knowledge of sport. His scent was very feeble, and his movements so slow and clumsy that I had bagged three fine fellows before he had got within biting distance.

“This is how you should tackle them,” said I, killing my fourth with a clinching nip in the back. But Billy had his chance at last. I distinctly traced a scent up to a large truss of straw in the corner.

“Ten biscuits to one,” I barked, “there is something here. I'll put him out for you. Now mark Jock ! mark, Billy !” They were hardly in position when one of the finest rats I have ever seen broke cover and bolted for his hole. Had I been in Billy's place that rat would have gone to his eternal home too rapidly for him to note the details of his departure. Billy just managed to grip him by the hind legs. The rat turned and savagely fixed on Billy's lip. To this day I often wag to myself when I think of that delightful fight.

“Keep away, keep away !” shrieked Billy, as I

offered to lend him a mouth. "I'm going to finish this job myself."

But whether Billy would finish the rat or the rat finish Billy seemed for some time an open question. Over and over they tumbled on the barn floor, whilst Jock and I barked our approbation. At last, with a supreme effort, Billy managed to shake his enemy off, and, seizing him again in a more sporting manner, to put an end to the dispute.

It was a proud moment for the Chihuahua when he placed the corpse of the defunct rat at Higgens' feet. It was an action that proved as diplomatic as it was magnanimous.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Higgens, touched in his sporting instinct, which was his most tender point. "So you've killed that big, ugly beast, almost as big as yourself, and you've brought it to me to show you've forgiven me! Well, *you're* a beauty, *you* are—a *real* beauty!"

Billy accepted his unexpected honour with modesty, but this, his first release from Human ostracism, filled him with delight. Life opened out new occupations and new possibilities. From this time forth he grew not only in stature but in wisdom. Whenever the drink craving seized him he would come to me and say—



"Well, you're a beauty, you are a real beauty!"

"Mrs. Hett" (Billy had grown quite respectful), "I feel a bit low. May I join you in a rat hunt?"

And so the autumn days crept on. Humans came and Humans went. Miss Fretcher, Mr. Singwell, Miss Seaton, Dr. Coghlan had gone, but I felt sure I should see them all again. The last two, before they went, had become—dear me! what is the word I want?—well, very intimate. Dr. Coghlan had bought Miss Seaton a diamond ring and placed it on her finger with great ceremony. It was a beautiful ring, certainly, but not so beautiful as to account for the importance Dr. Coghlan seemed to attach to it, or to explain the tears it brought into Mrs. Bennett's eyes.

"The ceremony must be celebrated in our village church here," Mrs. Bennett said. "I shall expect to see you all again in three months from now."

In the meantime Billy had become a changed being. Physically he was strong, healthy, and robust; mentally he was quaint, modest, and retiring. He was allowed, in the daytime, the run of the house, and, as (through the exhilaration of his new-found happiness and his surplus stock of aggressive gratitude towards all men) he had acquired an unfortunate knack of getting under the Humans' feet on every possible occasion, he became a dog that made his presence felt, and who, in his absence, was missed.

Only one thing seemed lacking to complete his



"Dear me ! what is the word I want ?"

Copyrighted June, 1899.

happiness. His own mistress, Mrs. Bennett, whom

he worshipped at a distance, never gave him a caress or a word of approbation. True, she never reproved him. She seemed simply unconscious of his existence.

"What am I to do," Billy used to groan to me, "what am I to do to obtain her forgiveness? It wasn't my fault that I grew big and made a fool of her."

"Well, I think she would like to know *who* you are and *what* you are; but you can't explain that, as you don't know yourself. But you be patient, Billy; Mrs. Bennett is a sweet, kind Human, and it will all come right in the end."

It was pitiful to see poor Billy following Mrs. Bennett with his eyes, walking round her at a distance with an apologetic air, and seeking to win her recognition with self-deprecatory wriggles.

One memorable day, towards the end of October, there was a great stir in the house. Innumerable guests began to arrive, and amongst them many old friends. Mr. Singwell and Miss Fretcher, apparently on the best of terms, came by the same train. Archie, who had been away on a visit, returned, accompanied by the young friend who had assisted him in his demonstration of the Chihuahua's knowledge of the Indian language. Billy's huge and ungainly pro-

portions caused Archie the greatest delight as he seized the dog by his front paws and waltzed him round the hall. Miss Seaton, Dr. Coghlan, and my master were all among the newcomers, the first two being positively radiant with happiness.

And now, when I least expected it, came the revelation which I had been months awaiting and which brings this history to a close. The last guest to arrive was an American gentleman. I suppose it was the peculiar inflections of his voice that excited Billy's curiosity and prompted him to run forward and get entangled in the stranger's legs.

"Christopher Columbus!" muttered the stranger, picking himself up and looking at the ashamed Billy. "What in the name of heaven is *that*!"

"How do you do, Mr. Anthony?" said Mrs. Bennett, coming forward to welcome her guest. "I am so sorry. 'That,'" she added, pointing at the cause of the disaster—" 'That' is the present you so kindly sent me from Mexico. 'That' is the 'Chihuahua Dog.'"

Mr. Anthony sat down in the nearest chair and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"You're joking," he said at last.

"That is the animal, Mr. Anthony," replied Mrs. Bennett, "which your brother delivered here as your



"What in the name of heaven is *that*?"

present of a Chihuahua dog from Mexico. You remember your letter—I know it by heart. ‘The soft-eyed Mexican, from whom I bought him, swore by all she held holy that he was three years old, had attained his full growth, and that ages would not add one ounce to his weight. I am told that these dogs are so intelligent that they can be taught to understand any language, and so sensitive that their large eyes fill with tears at a word of reproof. I have not yet seen this one weep with any degree of bitterness, and I have not had time to try him with Ollendorf, but when I see him again I have no doubt he will be entirely polyglot.’ Now, Mr. Anthony, that you see him again, you will be able to test the value of your expectations.”

Mr. Anthony leaned back in his chair.

“Here!” he said in his casual American way to the butler, who was standing near, “fetch me a telegraph form—we’ll soon have this mystery cleared up. My brother happens to be on this side, and I’ll trouble him for an explanation.” Mr. Anthony’s telegram was duly despatched, and it was at the very end of dinner, when Mr. Anthony’s body was refreshed and his spirits revived, that the answer was received.

“Christopher Columbus!” he muttered, after reading it. “Well, it isn’t my fault, Mrs. Bennett, but still,

of course, I apologise most profoundly. This is what my brother says : *'Forgot to feed dog you gave me. He died en route. Bought another dog in Seven Dials said to be Chihuahua. Gather from your telegram he has not proved satisfactory. Awfully sorry. Did best I could.'*"

Nobody laughed. Nobody spoke. There was a dead silence. Mrs. Bennett turned towards Billy.

"Come to me," she said.

Billy put two paws on her lap and gazed at her out of his soft brown eyes. She passed her hand gently over his shaggy head.

"I've suffered through you," she whispered, "but I am hypersensitive, and it wasn't your fault. I suppose you have suffered through me. Will you forgive me?"

Billy just jumped quietly on her lap and laid his head against her cheek. If there were no tears in Billy's eyes, there were tears in Billy's heart, which felt so full that it must break.

* * * * *

I was an old dog when these things happened, and now I am an older dog still, and waiting patiently to pay that debt to Nature which has to be paid by all Humans, all dogs, all living things. Only one thought troubles me. It is this—When I go forth into the

great Unknown, shall I ever see my dear Master again, the kind Sister at the hospital, the few friends I have loved, but whom I have loved so well?

Billy needn't think of these things; Billy is happy; Billy is still in his prime.

Visitors at Mrs. Bennett's house, visitors with perception, know there is one certain way of winning their hostess's affection—it is by bestowing a friendly word or kind caress on Billy, who is still known as "The Chihuahua Dog."



The End.

Apr-25 1901 (M 3)

482

APR 15 1901

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0002559082A

